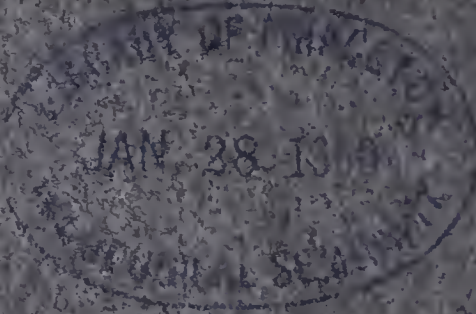


The Mennonite Church
AND
CURRENT ISSUES

By Daniel Kauffman

BX8121
.K21



D48121

K21



The Mennonite Church
AND
CURRENT ISSUES

By Daniel Kauffman

"Hold fast that which is good"

MENNONITE PUBLISHING HOUSE
Scottsdale, Pa.

1923

TABLE OF CONTENTS	Page
INTRODUCTORY	5
I. CHURCH HISTORY	10
II. MENNONITE DOCTRINE	18
III. THE MENACE OF MODERNISM	28
IV. DANGERS CONFRONTING OUR YOUNG PEOPLE	42
V. THE MENNONITE CHURCH	66
VI. THE CHRISTIAN HOME	85
VII. OUR PLACE IN THE MISSION FIELD	96
VIII. OUR PUBLICATION INTERESTS	108
IX. CHURCH AND SCHOOL	116



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2019 with funding from
Princeton Theological Seminary Library

INTRODUCTORY

The general spirit of unrest, manifest among the nations in the form of "wars and rumors of wars," manifest in the industrial world in the form of strikes and litigation, is also reflected in the disturbances found in the many churches. Wherever you find a church having trouble of any kind, the other churches, as a rule, sympathize with it because they have similar troubles within themselves. Will this feeling of unrest subside, or may we look for greater trials? Many are praying that the world spirit of unrest may be healed within the churches, that the Spirit of God may yet prevail in the hearts and lives of those who own His name, and that the work of bringing the lost to Jesus may be unhindered by strife among believers.

Believing that our readers both desire and deserve a free and frank discussion of the issues before us in the spirit of charity and of truth, I feel constrained, after much prayer and meditation to make the attempt. I have no promises to make as to how well I shall succeed, leaving that for the Lord and the kind reader to judge. But my experiences during the past few decades, during which time I was both a witness of and a participant in many of the things which I here undertake to discuss, enable me to speak from a knowledge of things I have both seen and heard.

Our discussions will include those things only with which the Mennonite Church is vitally concerned. And let me say right here that just because a church is struggling is no reason why it should be condemned. The conflict with sin has gone on steadily since the fall of man. It was manifest in the days of Christ and the apostles, and has been in evidence ever since. When therefore we see a church having a struggle or contest of any kind, let us not judge adversely until we know the nature of the struggle. Not, Are they having trouble? but, What is the cause and what the nature of their trouble? must determine where the blame rests. While it is true that "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal," it is also true that we are to "fight the good fight of faith;" that while "the servant of the Lord must not strive," we are, after all, to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." Thank God for the struggles of the Christian Church in behalf of righteousness, godliness, and real salvation. Only let us be sure that ours is the conflict of faith and our methods such that Heaven can approve.

Coming nearer to the issues before us, let us notice briefly one event which will give the reader some idea as to the issues which we as a church are facing.

On June 18, 1923, the Mennonite Board of Education held its annual meeting at Goshen College. Because of the situation in and about this

institution the Board had met in special session two months previous to that time, at which meeting the future of Goshen College was discussed from many angles. At the regular meeting the same question was again considered at some length. A motion was finally submitted that the college be suspended for one year, and that an administrative committee of five be appointed to make the necessary plans for the reopening of the institution in the fall of 1924. This motion, after some discussion and in the light of previous events and discussions, was adopted. Following is the form in which it was passed:

“Inasmuch as the expression given throughout the discussion of the future of Goshen College was to the effect that we should offer to the Church and our young people the advantages of the best at our command in the way of educational facilities, and since the conditions are such as to make it impractical to provide for the same for the coming year, be it

“Resolved, that an administrative committee of five members be appointed whose duties it shall be to make plans for an official organization, faculty, finances, student canvass, and the giving of general information to the Church; and in connection with the Executive Committee of the Board provide for the opening of Goshen College regularly in the fall of 1924, and, if advisable, arrange for a summer term previous.”

This action, interpreted, means:

1. That Goshen College will remain closed during the school year of 1923-24.

2. That in the meantime the administrative committee will work according to directions by the Board.

3. That Goshen College is to be reopened in September, 1924; that its state and standing will depend upon how heartily the Board is supported by the Church, especially that part of it located in the Middle West.

But this action of the Board, in itself, would not be considered of extraordinary importance were it not for the general conditions facing the Board which made such action necessary. It is generally conceded on every hand that the Board would have had comparatively small difficulties in going ahead without interruption had there been only strictly educational problems to consider. But because of other and underlying issues (to be considered in later chapters) the Board felt that the course it took was the only practical thing to do.

The results of this action on the part of the Board, working in cooperation with the rest of the Church in facing current issues, will be more clear in the light of coming events. The forces at work in the solution of our educational problems are also confronted with interrelated problems, and let us hope that by the time of the reopening of Goshen College these problems will have been satisfactorily adjusted. The question of the future of this institution is but one phase of the general educational problem, and this in turn is but a part of the general problem of the

Church the solution of which will determine the future status and work of the Mennonite Church. The doctrinal standards and ideals of the Church are among the things to be determined by the proper or improper solution of the problems before us.

The reader will recognize at once that the issues confronting the Christian churches today are more far-reaching than the mere question as to what will become of our schools. While the one is important, it is but a small item in the general issue. May we therefore give prayerful consideration to the things brought out in the succeeding chapters.

CHURCH HISTORY

Jesus Christ, Author of our eternal salvation, Head of the Christian Church, just previous to His ascension, delivered to His followers the following Great Commission:

“All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.”

After this He ascended to glory. The disciples, assured by the two men in white apparel that He was coming again, returned to Jerusalem and there continued in prayer and preparation until they were endued with power from on high. By common consent this Pentecostal experience was the beginning of the history of the Christian Church, the Church of the present dispensation.

The growth of the early Church was very rapid. By comparing I Cor. 15:6 (where the risen Lord was seen by more than “five hundred brethren”) with Acts 2:41-47; 4:4 (which gives us some idea of the growth and size of the Church soon after Pentecost), we conclude that the number of disciples before Pentecost must have been but slightly in excess of five hundred. At the close of the first century the Church is said to

have numbered about 500,000 members, and perhaps about four times that number at the close of the second century. The Gospel was carried into Samaria, Asia Minor, Europe, and northern Africa. Within three centuries after the crucifixion of our Lord the Roman emperor, Constantine, had made Christianity the religion of state.

Before this time, however, most of the churches had begun to drift away from the purity of the Gospel. As the Church of Rome grew in power and popularity it grew more worldly in its standards of life, making wider the chasm between it and evangelical bodies whose burden it was to maintain the faith and order of the Church in its primitive purity and spiritual power. Henceforth we look for the real standard of Christian life and faith among these evangelical bodies, known at different times and in different countries under the various names of Novatians, Catharists, Paulicans, Albigenses, Waldensians, etc.—the flames of true evangelical faith bursting forth anew in the trying times of the Reformation.

One would think that when Christianity became the state religion in Rome the empire would at once show signs of spiritual revival and progress in civilization and virtue. But the reverse is true. Instead of the Church succeeding in elevating Rome, Rome succeeded in completing the corruption of the Romish Church. For over a thousand years, beginning soon after the absorption of the body of churches by Rome, there was a condi-

tion of affairs in Europe known to the student of history as the "dark ages." But this very corruption was made the means in God's hands of bringing about an awakening in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries which ushered in a new era in the religious history of Europe. Partly because of the lives and teachings of Waldensians and other evangelical bodies, and partly because of the shameless practices of influential men in the Catholic Church, a fire was started which to a large extent broke the power and sway of Romanism. First among the noted reformers was John Wycliffe of England, who lived in the fourteenth century and whose effective work won for him the title, "Morning star of the Reformation." Then followed John Huss of Bohemia, whose fearless exposition of truth and righteousness brought upon him the wrath of the Roman Catholic Church, and he was burned at the stake. Later on Luther in Germany, Calvin in France, Zwingli in Switzerland, Knox in Scotland, Conrad Grebel in Switzerland, and Menno Simons in Holland rose to heights of influence and power, so that by the close of the sixteenth century the Roman Catholic Church was swept from power in most of the countries in Europe.

In 1525 a congregation was organized in Zurich, Switzerland, which proved to be the beginning of what is now known as the Mennonite Church. Foremost in this organization were men like Conrad Grebel, Felix Mans, George Blaurock, and others who held truth more dear than life. They were called "Anabaptists," partly because

they insisted on rebaptizing all converts who had not already been baptized upon confession of their faith. The Anabaptist sects became quite numerous, many of them holding nothing in common with the Church to which Grebel and Blaurock belonged save their views on baptism. The movement spread rapidly, and a few years later claimed among its adherents some of the ablest men in Switzerland, northern Germany, and Holland, among whom may be named such men as Diedrich Philips, Obbe Philips, Menno Simons, and others. The most prominent among these was Menno Simons. Because of his active work and great organizing ability the adherents of the faith were by their opponents called "Mennonites," a name which the Church has borne ever since. But these brethren did not at once own the name. In fact, in Holland, Menno's home country and the scene of his greatest activities, the Church to this day is known by the name of "Dooptesinnte." Gradually, however, the name "Anabaptist" was heard with less frequency until today the Church wherever known is called by the name which its enemies gave it. But the members are not so particular about the name as they are about the standards of faith and life for which the name stands.

The Mennonite Church faced some of the severest persecutions known in history. Thousands died at the stake. Thousands more spent much of their lives in an effort to escape from the hands of the persecutor, seeking places where they might worship God unmolested and in a way which they

believed the Bible taught. Protestants tried to exterminate them, because they refused to make common cause with Protestants against Catholics. Catholics tried to exterminate them, because they refused to acknowledge themselves members of "the holy Catholic Church." Acknowledging supreme obedience to God, being nonresistant in letter and in spirit, driven about from place to place, they were indeed "strangers and pilgrims in the earth," "lambs in the midst of wolves." Being driven about from country to country, enjoying brief seasons of rest from the hands of the persecutor, their sufferings were finally lessened through growing leniency shown them in certain European countries, notably Russia and Holland, while many of them accepted the invitation of the peaceful Penn to come to America and find an asylum of rest and worship there.

In 1683 the first permanent settlement of Mennonites was made in America. This was at Germantown, Pennsylvania, now a part of Philadelphia. Soon other groups of members followed, and settlements were made in the vicinity of Skip-pack, Line Lexington, and other places in southeastern Pennsylvania. About the year 1700 a settlement of Swiss Mennonites, severed from the main body of Mennonites in Europe about the year 1692, also found homes in eastern Pennsylvania early in the seventeenth century. From this part of the state emigrants traveled westward, crossed the Alleghenies, and settled in western Pennsylvania, Ohio, and, later on, in states farther

west. Some traveled southward and formed settlements in the Cumberland Valley of Pennsylvania and in Maryland and Virginia. Still others, soon after the Revolutionary War, traveled northward and formed settlements in western New York and Canada. Thus it is that, outside a few settlements in Ohio and Illinois, and, later on, the settlements of Russian Mennonites in Kansas, Nebraska, Manitoba, and other states and provinces, there were practically no settlements of Mennonites made in America that had not previously been started by emigrants from eastern Pennsylvania or the descendants of such emigrants.

One of the strong features in Mennonite doctrine and polity is that of holding fast the pure Word of God, of making this the basis of all doctrine, rules of life, and discipline, and of aversion to tolerating any form of sin in the Church. Commendable as this is, it has also been made the means of causing divisions among the body of members. Nine-tenths of the divisions noted, either congregational or church-wide, owe their origin to the fact that some member or members were not willing to submit to the discipline of the Church and the Church was not willing to modify its discipline. As a result, we have here in America more than a dozen different churches holding on to some form of the word "Mennonite." Out of a total membership of about 75,000 in America, about one-half hold to "The Mennonite Church," the main body of Mennonites in Amer-

ica having a continuous organization in America since the organization of the first congregation at Germantown. The next strongest is "The General Conference of Mennonites of North America," being a union of "Oberholtzer" Mennonites in eastern Pennsylvania (named after J. H. Oberholtzer, who withdrew from the Franconia Conference about the year 1847) and a number of congregations of Swiss Mennonites in Iowa and Illinois and later reinforced by Russian Mennonites who came to America during the past fifty years. Next in point of numbers is the branch called Amish Mennonites (having among them several branches), following which in point of numerical strength are the Mennonite Brethren in Christ, Bruedergemeinde, and others.

We all regret these many divisions—and many are the prayers that, under the providence of God, we may yet see the day when all people bearing the name Mennonite, with others, may be united in the same faith and same communion, and rejoice in a common fellowship with Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

The main body of Mennonites, being a continuation of the organization of Mennonites at Germantown, Pa., more than two centuries ago, is still officially known as "The Mennonite Church." It consists of about 40,000 members, having thirteen conferences in the United States, two in Canada, one in India, and one in South America. It is this body of people that we have under consid-

eration in the chapters succeeding. Whenever any other body of Mennonites is named, it will be referred to by its official title.

MENNONITE DOCTRINE

The preceding chapter answers the question, Who are the Mennonites? This chapter is written in answer to the question, What do Mennonites believe?

No church has a right to exist as a separate denomination unless there is sufficient scriptural ground for its separate existence. There is no justifiable ground for separate existence for any church, unless its doctrinal views are so decidedly different from those of other churches that an attempted unity between them would be a misnomer, or unless the members of the several churches could not conscientiously fellowship together in the same communion. If they can conscientiously commune together, there is no lawful scriptural reason for a separate existence.

In the light of these facts, we consider it important to examine, for a little while, the doctrinal ground, the "creed," of the Mennonite Church.

Evangelical Faith

The Mennonites, in common with all other adherents of the evangelical faith, believe:

*1. That there is but one God, eternal, infinite, perfect, unchangeable, Who exists and reveals Himself in three distinct persons—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Deut. 6:4; Psa. 90:2; 147:5;

*From a statement on "Christian Fundamentals," adopted by the Mennonite Conference at Sycamore Church near Garden City, Mo., Aug. 25, 1921.

139:7-12; Gen. 1:2, 18; 17:1; Isa. 40:28; 57:15; Mal. 3:6; Heb. 1:8.

2. That the Genesis account of the creation is a historic fact and literally true. Gen. 1:1, 21, 27; Ex. 20:11; Mark 10:6-9; Heb. 1:10; 4:4; 11:3.

3. In the plenary and verbal inspiration of the Bible as God's Word; that it is authentic in its matter, authoritative in its counsels, inerrant in the original writings, and the only infallible rule in faith and practice. Ex. 4:12; II Sam. 23:2; Psa. 12:6; 119:160; Jer. 1:9; Matt. 5:18; 24:35; II Tim. 3:16; II Pet. 1:20, 21.

4. That man was created by the immediate act of God, in His own image and after His own likeness; that by one act of disobedience he became sinful in his nature, spiritually dead, subject to physical death and to the power of the devil, from which fallen condition he was unable to save himself. Gen. 1:26, 27; 2:7, 16, 17; 3:1-7; Eph. 2:1-3, 12; Jno. 6:44; Rom. 5:6.

5. That Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God; that He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin—the perfect God-man; that He was without sin, the divinely appointed substitute and representative of sinful man, paying the penalty for man's sins upon the cross, making the only adequate atonement for sin by the shedding of His blood, thus reconciling man to God; that He was raised from the dead, ascended to glory, and “ever liveth to make intercession for us.” Jno. 1:1, 14, 18; Heb. 1:8; 6:20; 7:25; 13:8; Gen. 3:15;

Isa. 7:14; 53:5, 6; Luke 1:35; Matt. 1:20-25; II Cor. 5:14, 21; Gal. 3:13; I Pet. 2:22, 24; 3:18; Rom. 5:8-10; Matt. 28:6; Acts 3:24; 8:11; 10:39-41; 17:31; I Cor. 5:20; 15:20; Rev. 1:18; Col. 3:1; I Jno. 2:1, 2.

6. That man is saved alone by grace through faith in the finished work of Christ; that he is justified from all things on the ground of His shed blood; that through the new birth he becomes a child of God, partaker of eternal life and blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ. Eph. 1:3; 2:8; Jno. 1:12, 13; 3:4, 8, 16; Acts 13:38, 39; Rom. 3:20-26.

7. In the deity and personality of the Holy Spirit; that He convinces the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; that He indwells and comforts the believer, guides him into all truth, empowers for service and enables him to live a life of righteousness. Acts 1:8; 5:3, 4; Jno. 16:7, 8, 13; Rom. 8:1-4; I Cor. 3:16; II Cor. 3:3, 17; Gal. 4:6.

8. That it is the privilege of all believers to know that they have passed from death unto life; that God is able to keep them from falling, but that the obedience of faith is essential to the maintenance of one's salvation and growth in grace. I Jno. 3:14; 5:13; Jno. 8:31, 32; Rom. 1:5; 8:16; 16:25, 26; II Cor. 12:9; Gal. 3:11; II Pet. 1:5-11; Jude 24, 25.

9. That the Church is the body of Christ, composed of all those who, through repentance

toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, have been born again and baptized by one Spirit into one body, and that it is her divinely appointed mission to "preach the Gospel to every creature," teaching obedience to all His commandments. Matt. 16:18; 28:19, 20; Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8; 16:31; 17:30; 20:21; Luke 24:47; I Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:26; Eph. 1:23.

10. In the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ and in the bodily resurrection of all men, both of the just and the unjust—of the just to the resurrection of life, and of the unjust to the resurrection of condemnation. Luke 24:30, 31; Jno. 5:28, 29; 20:20, 24-29; Acts 24:15; I Cor. 15:20-23, 42-44.

11. In the second coming of our Lord as the blessed hope of the believer; that we who are alive and remain, together with the dead in Christ who will first be raised, shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air and thus be ever with the Lord. Matt. 24:44; Jno. 14:2, 3; Acts 1:11; I Thes. 4:13-18; Tit. 2:11-14; Heb. 10:37.

12. That hell is the place of torment, prepared for the devil and his angels, where with them the wicked will suffer the vengeance of eternal fire forever and ever—and that heaven is the final abode of the righteous, where they will dwell in the fulness of joy forever and ever. Matt. 25:41, 46; II Cor. 5:21; Jude 7; Rev. 14:8-11; 20:10, 15; 21:3-8; 22:1-5.

13. That baptism should be administered to penitent believers who are applicants for admis-

sion into the visible Church. Matt. 28:19, 20; Acts 2:37-41; 8:37; 10:47; 19:1-5.

14. That the communion, as a sacred ordinance, should be literally observed by all believers. Luke 22:19, 20; I Cor. 10:16; 11:23-26.

15. That marriage was divinely instituted for the propagation, purity, and happiness of the human race and the sanctity of the home, and that it receives divine sanction between one man and one woman only. Gen. 2:23, 24; Matt. 19:3-6; Heb. 13:4.

16. That the miracles of the Bible are matter of fact statements and literally true. Matt. 12:40; Acts 1:3.

17. That God has made provision for the organization, government and perpetuation of His visible Church; that He has given her authority (through the Holy Spirit) to interpret Scripture, choose needed officials, discipline members, and establish institutions to accomplish the work committed unto her; that every member should loyally support the Church by a willing obedience and ready service. Matt. 18:15, 18; Eph. 4:11, 16; Heb. 13:17.

18. That God's people should be pure, holy, devout, reverent, not yielding to the lusts of the flesh; that therefore, vulgar conversation, secret vice, and other improper and sinful conduct which gives rise to social evils are entirely outside the realm of Christian living. II Cor. 7:1; Gal. 5:19-21; I Jno. 3:3.

19. That the disciples of Christ in every generation of the Christian era, are commissioned to make Christ and His Gospel known to all people, teaching them to observe all things which He has commanded His followers to do. Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46, 47; Acts 1:8.

Distinctive Doctrines

The Mennonites, in common with some churches and unlike other churches, also believe:

1. That the whole Bible is literally true, and that all the commandments of Christ to His people, as recorded in the gospels and epistles, should be literally obeyed by all believers. Matt. 28:18-20; Jno. 14:15; 15:14; Rom. 16:16, 17; I Jno. 2:2-4.

2. That penitent believers are admitted into the visible Church by water baptism, even as they are admitted into the invisible Church by the Holy Ghost baptism; that baptism should be administered only upon confession of faith and upon evidence of genuine repentance and conversion (Matt. 3:7, 8; Acts 2:36-41; 8:36, 37; 16:25-34); and that, being the symbol of Spirit baptism which is always referred to as an affusion, it should be administered in the same way (Joel 2:28; Acts 1:5; 2:1-17; 10:44-48; 11:15, 16; Psa. 77:17-21; I Cor. 10:1, 2; I Jno. 5:7, 8).

3. That Christ instituted the communion as a memorial of His suffering and death, and that it should be observed as such by all believers; that only such who are of like faith and are at

peace with God and man should participate. Luke 22:19, 20; I Cor. 10:16, 17; 11:23-26.

4. That the washing of the saints' feet is a Christian ordinance which should be literally observed by all believers. Jno. 13:1-17.

5. That the Christian woman, especially during times of worship and Christian service, should have her head covered or veiled according to I Cor. 11:2-16.

6. That the salutation of the holy kiss should be observed among all believers. Rom. 16:16; I Cor. 16:20; II Cor. 13:12; I Thess. 5:26; I Pet. 5:14.

7. That the anointing with oil should be administered to the sick who call for it in faith. Jas. 5:14, 15; Mark 6:13.

8. That marriage being indissoluble except by death, it is unscriptural for any one to be united in marriage to a divorced person having a former companion living (Gen. 2:18; Mark 10:2-12; Rom. 7:2); neither is it scriptural for a believer to marry an unbeliever. Deut. 7:3; Ezra 9:2; Neh. 13:23-27; I Cor. 7:39.

9. That the Church and the world are two separate and distinct bodies; with standards, aims, tastes, and attachments essentially different. For church members, therefore, to be conformed to this world is both disloyal to God and sinful in His sight. Jno. 18:36; Rom. 12:1, 2; II Cor. 6:14-18; I Jno. 2:15, 16.

10. That Christian people should be clothed in modest apparel; that the wearing of jewelry,

costly array, fashionable attire, and bodily ornamentation generally should be scrupulously avoided by believers. Isa. 3:16-24; Matt. 3:5, 6; I Tim. 2:9, 10; I Pet. 3:3, 4.

11. That the letter and spirit of the Gospel are decidedly against strife, contention, and carnal warfare; and that therefore no believer should have any part in carnal strife or warfare, whether among individuals, in suits at law, or in conflicts among nations. Matt. 5:38-45; Rom. 12:17-21; I Cor. 6:1-8; II Cor. 10:4.

12. That there should be a complete separation between Church and State; that, though "pilgrims and strangers in the earth," we should be "subject unto the higher powers," submitting ourselves "to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake," remembering that we owe our first and highest allegiance to God. Jno. 18:36; Acts 5:29; Rom. 13:1-5; Heb. 11:13.

13. That under the Gospel dispensation the swearing of oaths, for any purpose and under all circumstances, is forbidden. Matt. 5:34-37; Jas. 5:12.

14. That Christian people should have no part in secret, oathbound organizations. Since labor unions and fraternal organizations partake of the same features they should be considered in the same light. Jno. 18:20; II Cor. 6:14-18; Eph. 5:11, 12.

15. That life insurance for the welfare and protection of God's people is contrary to the will

and Word of God. Psa. 118:8; Jer. 49:11; Matt. 6:31-34; I Tim. 5:8; Heb. 13:5.

In connection with the above named tenets of faith it might be said that there are individual Mennonites (probably have been in all generations since the Mennonite Church was organized) who would reject some of them, but speaking of the body of Mennonites as a whole, if a complete confession of faith were written today these points would all be included. That they form an essential part of Mennonite doctrine is evident when we study the literature of our forefathers, the record of our conferences, and the sermons of our preachers today.

We call this "Mennonite doctrine." In reality, it is **Bible doctrine**, for they are all taught in the Word of God—not one of them that is not backed up by plainly worded scriptures. If any one doubts this point, let him look up the references given.

Another thought in connection with the points of faith noted in this chapter is that there is not one of them, if obeyed from the heart and kept in the spirit of the Gospel, but that will make a positive contribution to Christian life and character. They were all conceived in divine wisdom, and there is not one of them that should not be obeyed with gladness—and in so doing we will find that not only "his commandments are not grievous" but they are a positive help in making us stronger in the grace of God and safeguard us against many

a snare and temptation. In conclusion, may we hear this message by the pen of Paul: "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."

THE MENACE OF MODERNISM

The Christian Church is facing a crisis. A generation ago people were divided into two classes—believers and unbelievers. The former class, generally, either held membership in some church or actively sympathized with what the Church stands for. The latter class, almost without exception, consisted of people who were not only no church members but active church fighters. There were numerous schools of thought in each of these two classes. One has only to think over the catalogue of churches to be convinced that there were differences of opinion among believers, and a similar difference could be found among unbelievers who differed widely among themselves on many points. But there was one distinct line of cleavage between the two classes. The first class acknowledged without question the authority and infallibility of Scripture, and the second class as stoutly stood against this doctrine.

Today this situation is changed. Many of the things formerly taught by Voltaire, Paine, Darwin, Owen, Hume, Ingersoll, and others, and still earlier taught by opponents of Christianity from the days of the gnostics in apostolic times, down through the centuries, are being shamelessly propagated in leading universities and theological seminaries and handed out from the pulpit by eminent divines and labeled "christianity." And whether you call these heresies "Unitarianism,"

“New Theology,” “New Thought,” “Reorganized Theology,” “The Evolutionary Hypothesis,” “Agnosticism,” “Free Thought,” “Destructive Criticism,” “Modernism,” or designate them by some other name, we understand that these are but so many different varieties of unbelief, members of the school of modern skeptics, widely differing in many of their views yet all agreeing that the old-fashioned Christianity has served its day, and unanimously lined up in opposition to the orthodox Christian faith.

The battle between the adherents of the old faith and those of the new theology is becoming warmer as the designs of the enemies of the Bible are becoming more evident. It is becoming increasingly clear that Modernism is throwing off its mask (in part) and means to capture the entire Christian Church for a Christless christianity. The fundamentals of the Christian faith—such as the verbal inspiration of Scripture, the authenticity and authority of the Bible as God’s Word, the deity and virgin birth of Christ and atonement for sin through the shedding of His blood, the future punishment of the wicked as well as the future glory of the righteous, etc., etc.—are being ridiculed and opposed with ever-increasing boldness and by ever-increasing numbers. This opposition is coming more and more into the open, and its champions are boldly claiming a monopoly on all that goes by the name of scholarship, brains, reason, intelligence, and propose to capture the Church for—what was formerly known as “infi-

delity." Believers in orthodoxy have their choice between two alternatives: either to abandon the truth to its foes and withdraw to become a little body to themselves while forces of unbelief capture and shepherd the masses, or rise in their Christian privileges, "make full proof of their ministry," defend and promulgate the living Word, and turn the light upon the enemies of the Gospel of Christ.

A few illustrations will suffice to show what we are facing:

In a notable gathering there were those who boldly proclaimed their belief that the old theology had outlived its usefulness and that we needed a new order of affairs, a new message, better suited to our time. In the audience was one who refused to be carried away with such heresy. He arose, read from a certain book the views of a writer who upheld the very theories they were so eloquently proclaiming, and then added, "Does that express your views on these doctrines?" "That expresses our views exactly," came from a chorus of voices. "Gentlemen," said this man of faith, "I am reading from the writings of Thomas Paine." He had spotted his crowd, and exposed them.

Last year, in the city of Indianapolis, Indiana, the northern Baptists held their General Convention. Many of their most faithful members, conscious of the inroads that are being made on the time-honored position of the Christian Church on

the fundamentals of the Christian faith, made an effort to have the Convention commit itself on these fundamentals. The battle of words was on. The Liberals, as usual, dodged the real issue and finally succeeded in mustering a majority vote in favor of tabling the proposition to adopt these fundamentals on the ground that they were opposed to adopting a "creed." For a month or more after the General Convention adjourned the debate on "Fundamentalism" was continued in convention halls, in the religious and secular press, in homes and in churches. The religious world was stirred to the depths because of this rising and threatening menace.

This year another denomination, the northern Presbyterians, held a similar meeting in the same city, and the same bone of contention became the dominating issue of the assembly. This time the fight centered on the question as to who should be moderator of the Assembly. The man selected by the Fundamentalists to lead them in this contest was none less than W. J. Bryan, whose scholarship and eloquence have of late years been employed in turning the light on the enemies of the Bible, and whose fight on Evolution and kindred heresies has given him a standing for orthodoxy which no one could doubt or gainsay. Moreover, his ability is generally recognized, so that his fitness for the place was unquestioned. As usual, the modernists evaded the real issue. They selected as their candidate for moderator one who declared himself a "conservative" but who at the

same time shielded the modernists under the delusive name of "toleration." The modernists won and Bryan was defeated. Although this Assembly passed some measures which some interpret as victories for Fundamentalism, an analysis of the meeting indicates that the vote for moderator was a fair index of the spiritual complexion of the Assembly.

While the name of Bryan is mentioned in connection with these illustrations, it is in order to submit another illustration in which he figures largely. Our readers recall the names of several of his most well known books against Modernism, Evolution being his principal point of attack. Notable among these are, "In His Image" and "The Bible and Its Enemies." One thing that should not be forgotten in connection with this controversy is the fact that without exception the outspoken atheists, infidels, rationalists, and other avowed enemies of the Bible are lining up on the side of Evolution. What would be more natural than that preachers, educators occupying chairs in theological seminaries, and other religious leaders calling themselves Christian should line up solidly against this anti-scriptural heresy? But the fact is that Bryan's bitterest opposition comes from eminent divines, college presidents, educators holding down the best paying positions in so-called Christian seminaries. This same class, supposed to be the champions of the Christian faith, are the loudest in their protest against the idea of making the teaching of Evolution (at present the

most popular enemy of the Bible) unlawful in the public schools.

During the past ten years a number of questionnaires have been sent out by interested individuals to men noted for their scholarship, pulpit oratory, and success on the lecture platform. Among these were college presidents, scientists, eminent theologians, and other classes of recognized leaders. The percentage of those who recorded their unbelief—most of them denying the deity and virgin birth of Christ, disputing the authority of the Bible as God's Word, rejecting the idea of the miracle, denouncing the idea of future punishment for the wicked, ridiculing many of the things which men of faith hold dear, some even denying the existence of a God—is astonishing and alarming. Prof. Loube, one of those to send out such a questionnaire, afterwards wrote a book on the answers he received, in which he very profoundly impressed his readers with the deduction that while the more ignorant classes generally still believed the old-fashioned theology the more scholarly and enlightened men of today are inclined to skepticism and unbelief. In other words, according to his conclusion, as scholarship increases the old-fashioned faith decreases.

It is a fact that the teaching of Evolution and kindred heresies finds a place in most of our colleges, universities, and theological seminaries, while most of the popular preachers in America who pride themselves in their scholarship are

either believers in these heresies or afraid or ashamed to come out boldly against them.

Such facts as these should awaken every devout believer to a sense of the dangers confronting us. The Christ-professing world is rapidly turning to skepticism. The Christian Church, from its God-ordained position of messenger of the faith and home of the faithful, is being turned into a social betterment and civic righteousness organization. What pronounced skeptics are saying from the housetops is secretly cherished in the hearts of many who by most people are supposed to be fairly sound in the faith. Not only Baptists and Presbyterians (the churches named in our illustrations, and which churches are considered less honeycombed with Modernism than some others) but Methodists, Mennonites, Dunkards, and other evangelical bodies are confronted with this monster—Modernism. We might as well open our eyes to the fact that he is at our door, and we can take our choice between surrender, running, or fighting.

The contrast between Modernism and the old orthodox Christian faith is thus graphically set forth in "China's Millions" under the heading,

"Twelve Points of Difference between the Old and the New Theology:"

1. The New Theology says, the Bible **contains** the Word of God; the Old Theology says, the Bible **is** the

Word of God—the Word judging man, rather than man judging the Word.

2. The New Theology says, Jesus Christ is a son of God; the Old Theology says, Jesus is **the** Son of God.

3. The New Theology says, the birth of Jesus was **natural**; the Old Theology says, the birth of Jesus was **supernatural**.

4. The New Theology says, the death of Jesus Christ was **exemplary**; the Old Theology says, the death of Jesus was **expiatory**.

5. The New Theology says, the life of Christ is the life He lived here on earth; the Old Theology says, the true life of Christ is also the life He is living for us at the Throne.

6. The New Theology says, character is built up, like Babel, from beneath; the Old Theology says, real and lasting character is something that comes down, like the New Jerusalem, from above.

7. The New Theology says, man is the product of evolution; the Old Theology says, man is God's special creation.

8. The New Theology says, man is the unfortunate victim of environment; the Old Theology says, man is an actual sinner, fallen and utterly lost.

9. The New Theology says, man is justified by works of his own; the Old Theology says, man is justified by faith in the Atoning Blood of Christ.

10. The New Theology says, the new life and nature of Christianity comes by natural development of the best that is in us; the Old Theology says, it comes by miraculous regeneration and sanctification through the Holy Spirit.

11. The New Theology says, the Gospel was sent to save the world; the Old Theology says, the Gospel was sent to save men out of the world.

12. The New Theology sets its hope of the future

on man's civilization; the Old Theology sets its hope on Christ's coming and Kingdom, spiritually existent today in men's hearts, actual and gloriously so in a future day.

Methinks I hear some one say, "Surely there are no Mennonites who reject the fundamentals of the Christian faith!" Put in this form, the question might be answered "No." You would have to go a long way to find a communicant member of the Mennonite Church who would openly and avowedly reject the doctrine of Inspiration of Scripture, of the Deity of Christ, of the Authority of Scripture, of the Virgin Birth of Christ, of the eternal punishment of the wicked, and kindred Christian doctrines. But you find an astonishingly large percentage of those who within the past ten years have attended colleges, universities, and seminaries of liberal leanings who are weak enough on the fundamentals of the Christian faith that they seldom if ever defend them except in a general way; who seem to have a greater relish for liberalistic literature than for the writings of those who are outspoken against Modernism; who manifest a greater friendliness toward outspoken champions of Liberalism than toward those of their own brethren who discern the signs of the times and are warning our people against the dangers confronting us. Unless the Mennonite Church takes cognizance of these things and begins at once a vigorous policy of conservation of the old orthodox faith and of our young people for this faith, another decade will find us where many of the popular churches are

today—helpless under the sway of Modernism, its young blood enthused over anti-scriptural standards. The problems thus raised will be discussed in succeeding chapters.

From what is stated in the preceding paragraph the reader might get the idea that the writer concedes that the scholarship of the present time is practically all on the side of Liberalism, antagonistic to the fundamentals of the Christian faith. On the other hand we, with others, recognize that the ripest scholarship is still on the side of orthodoxy. There are numerous instances where, under the name of science, some anti-scriptural heresy was bolstered up with great enthusiasm by learned men, but it takes only about one generation (sometimes less) for later revelations of science to prove such theories false. Some of the ripest scholars now living are ardent defenders of the Bible as the Book of God, holding it to be absolutely reliable, the testimony of its critics to the contrary notwithstanding. In his admirable treatise on "Evolution at the Bar," Philip Mauro quotes author after author, scholar after scholar, their testimonies covering page after page, showing that the ripest scholarship is still against Evolution and kindred heresies. Among these he names the following: Prof. Luther T. Townsend, author of "The Collapse of Evolution;" James Dwight Dana, famous American geologist, mineralogist, and zoologist; Lord Kelvin, foremost among English scientists; and many others renowned for their scholarship and attainments.

The following sentence is taken from "Fallacies of Evolution," by J. D. Charles: "Among hundreds of others who deny the theory (of Evolution) we may mention Agassiz, Carpenter, Beale, Dana, Dawson, Faraday, Gray, Herschel, Helmholtz, Lord Kelvin, See, Leibnitz, Lantz, Pasteur, Verdt, Haecke, Maury, Romanes."

But while it is true that the ripest scholarship of the present is still on the side of orthodoxy, it is also true that most of the writings against heterodoxy on the part of this class of men are confined almost wholly to a protest against "science, falsely so-called" while the men and women who write the text and reference books for our schools and colleges are, as a rule, the ones who take it for granted that Evolution is practically a proven fact and that there are no serious reasons why scientists should allow anything that may be written in the Bible to interfere with their conclusions. It is **their** writings, therefore, rather than the writings of men and women who are scripturally sound, that find their way into the hands of our young people in school life, beginning with the public school and ending with the university and seminary. Here lies our danger—a real vital problem which confronts parents, teachers, and spiritual overseers.

The enemy of souls today is using the same tactics that he did when first he introduced himself to Mother Eve in the garden of Eden. He dodges the real issue. Eve heard much about enlightenment—what she might expect if she assert-

ed her independence to a sufficient extent to reach forth her hand and partake of the forbidden fruit, but she heard only one feeble sentence of negation: "Ye shall **not** surely die." In like manner, today the devil contents himself by simply scorning and laughing away the Truth of God's Word, while he exerts himself energetically as an angel of light, convincing men how much better it is to disregard the "thou shalt not's" of Scripture and asserting their "liberty" to think and do as they please; holding before the people today the rainbow-like specter of the golden age, which lies just beyond the time when the human family will have thrown off the bondage of law. His most successful game is that of putting people to sleep while he keeps up his propaganda of unbelief and drifting in the popular current. Like the false prophets in the days of Jeremiah, the emissaries of Satan today are denouncing as alarmists all who discern the signs of the times and faithfully sound the note of warning. Blind optimism is but the devil's hood to blind the eyes of the people, that they may remain satisfied to drift down the stream—until it is forever and eternally too late to find safety, peace, and glory at the hands of the true God of our salvation.

Modernism can be defined in one word—UNBELIEF. But modernists, taking a lesson from their master, do not propose to let this come up, if they can help it. Their view of the Bible is just as tenable as is the view of orthodox people—save in the matter of method and interpretation. They

believe in Jesus—and it is not necessary to believe that He was without human father, or where He went after He was buried in Joseph's tomb. Their designs are kept hidden as long as they can be kept out of the way. Even their most outspoken leaders, while brazen-facedly denying and ridiculing the fundamentals of Scripture, pose as martyrs when a serious effort is made to oust them from their office because of their unbelief. As a study in their methods of attack, let us take the Jonah story. You do not hear as much about that as you used to; people are talking about other things. But much as was said about a man remaining alive three days in a whale's belly (to say nothing of the whale's proverbially small throat) that was not the real point at issue. Acknowledge the possibility of a miracle, and it is not hard to believe the story, whether the whale swallowed Jonah or Jonah swallowed the whale. But the real point to watch is this: This experience with the whale was the only incident connected with the whole story to which Christ referred and gave it credence. To discredit this part of the story means to discredit the doctrine of Christ's infallibility; hence the real question at issue was not the credibility of the Jonah story but the infallibility of Christ. Again, let us notice that in the Evolution theory the real question at issue is not so much whether man was created by immediate act of God or whether he ascended through development over the amoeba-tadpole-monkey-man process or route; but because this theory directly

contradicts the teaching of the Bible concerning man's origin and history, it can not be believed without discrediting the Bible as an authentic revelation from God who cannot lie.

Modernism, then, stripped of its verbiage and pretense, is this: An effort to set aside the old orthodox Christian faith, and substitute in its stead the unbelief that through the centuries has appeared as the enemy of Christ and of the Christian religion. Perhaps we should not say, "Modernism," for the theories which modernists hold—some of them—were held by unbelievers of many centuries ago. "Aristotle, who lived B. C. 384-322, may be regarded as the father of the theory of descent" (Charles). About the only living thing about the system that is distinctly modern is the thought of giving unbelief an ecclesiastical coat and labeling it "christianity." The thought seemed to have dawned upon Ingersoll in his last days, for it is reported that shortly before his death he said there was no longer any need for him to continue his lectures against Christianity, since preachers are telling his story for him.

DANGERS CONFRONTING OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

Years ago I was in correspondence with one of our workers whose experiences had been similar to those of my own. Being interested in the training of young people, and desiring to serve their best interests, he encountered a number of problems which brought him face to face with the issue of Liberalism vs. Conservatism. Among other things he wrote:

"I catch it from both sides. The progressives have it in for me because I do not side in with them in all things. The conservatives have it in for me because they think I let the progressives have their own way too much. One side kicks me because I am too slow, and the other side kicks me because I am too fast. But I don't care. I can not please both sides, so I am not trying to please either. It doesn't hurt me."

To this I replied, in substance:

"It hurts me. While I am praying the Lord for grace to bear in patience everything that is hurled at me personally, it is exceedingly painful to me to see the cause of Christ suffer because people are pulling at cross purposes. Through a misinterpretation of one another's motives, people fail to give one another credit for what they attempt to do, and in this way many become discouraged while our young people's temptations become all the greater. I confess that these things hurt me."

The curse of Modernism, with its attendant

evils, makes the training of our young people for God and the Church an ever-increasingly difficult task. While the issues to be presented in this chapter are vital to old as well as young, the fact that "the young people of today are the Church of tomorrow," and that the issues herein named carry an especial appeal to those of younger blood, I am constrained to discuss them under the title standing at the head of this chapter.

As parents, we can not, neither should we desire to, get away from this divine injunction with reference to our children:

"Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

Neither can we, or should we desire to, get away from this solemn warning:

"If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."

Remembering that "children are an heritage from the Lord," all Christian parents can appreciate the responsibility resting upon them. When the faithful fathers and mothers in Israel will stand before the Throne of God and hear the words of commendation, "Thou hast been faithful over a few things," not the least among these "few things" is the proper care for and training of their children.

A few weeks ago I was talking with an aged grandmother who recounted the experiences of her life. Among other things she said:

“We had ten children, but only four of them grew up to be men and women. Two of them died in infancy. One time scarlet fever entered our home, and before it was over with four more of the children were gone, two of them laid in the same grave. People did not know then how to take care of fever patients as they do now.”

Smiles and tears were in evidence as this woman, having a true mother's heart, told her simple story. She was conscious of the broken heartstrings occasioned by the taking away of her loved ones, yet she realized that they were safe in the glory world. When a mortal enemy, disease, laid hold on her children she did what only a true mother is constrained to do in an effort to save them. The fact that she was not able to save all of them did not lessen her responsibility of doing all in her power to that end. It is only then, no matter whether children are saved or lost, that the divine benediction, “She hath done what she could,” can be given.

Today our young people are encompassed about with mortal enemies, more deadly than scarlet fever has ever been. While mortal disease may take our little ones away, it simply relieves them from bodily pains and ills and the sorrows of earth, and hastens the time when their happy souls are wafted home to glory; but when some mortal enemies of the souls of children take hold of them, a failure to rescue them means not only a degraded, God-dishonoring life here, but an “eternal destruction from the presence of the Lord”—a matter so serious that no parent with

real father or mother love can ever think of counting it a little thing. As our "children are an heritage from the Lord," let nothing be left undone that can be done to "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," to "train up the child in the way he should go," to the end that we may hand them back to God as shining jewels for His Kingdom.

But what are these enemies which our young people are facing today? We will name a few, the ones nearest at hand at the present time. Foremost among these is

The Popular Current

which, at the present time, brings dangerously near to our doors the curse of MODERNISM, noticed in the preceding chapter.

The popular current, as we understand it, is the stream of life, the ordinary course in which the world goes. Since "the whole world lieth in wickedness," and since walking "according to the course of this world" is designated in Scripture as one of the marks of those who are "dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1,2), we recognize at once the nature of the danger before us. It is natural for people to yield to the influences around them. Israel forsook God because the people wanted to be "like other nations." The same desire is in evidence on every hand today. Young people, especially, being in the impressionable period of their lives and lacking sufficient experience

to give them a deep-seated hatred for popular sin, are especially susceptible to influence and for this reason need to be safeguarded against danger, as the faithful shepherd guards the tender lambs against the ravages of ravening wolves.

There are more and stronger temptations to draw our young people into the popular current than there were a generation ago. There are more young people in high schools than there used to be; industrial changes have brought more of them into the shops in early manhood and womanhood; rapid transit has brought them into closer contact with pleasure resorts and other places both fascinating and destructive to purity and godliness. This medley of attractions—pleasure, pride, riches, the theater, the movie, the billiard hall, the ball room, the club room, the world's vain fashions, the secret lodge, prospects for positions of ease and honor and power—is appealing to our young people with greater power and directness than it did a generation ago because our latter-day inventions and associations have brought these things nearer to them. Moreover, the very bringing up of children in the midst of hardship and self-denial, coupled with the advantages of our modern school system, has the effect of developing a superior type of manhood, and the world is quick to make a bid for them in the form of flattery and tempting offers which are hard to turn down.

People are the more easily victimized by this popular current because it is not always clear to

them what is involved. They see only "restriction" in the effort to keep them out of these dangers, and can not see why they should be restrained in their liberties. They are blinded—at least in part—to the fact that in this downward stream there is not only liberty, pleasure, good fellowship, temporary satisfaction, and popularity, but also lust, depravity, and ruin. The sparkling liquid and brilliant cup are but the forerunner of a drunkard's grave and a drunkard's hell, the innocent game is but the beginning of the gambler's end, the house of pleasure is but the half-way station on the road to the den of infamy—and so on down the list. It is not for the mere sake of prohibiting people from the privilege of popular associations that these things are opposed, but in the popular current are to be found the cup, the pipe, the cigar, the cigarette, the theater, the ball room, the lodge, the gambling den, the circus, the brothel, and every other place and influence and sin known to sinful men. The longer you are in the current the less hideous these things seem to you and the more of them there are in the list of your indulgences. All that there is in the world in the way of wreck and ruin may be found in the popular current of worldliness.

School Influence

We thank God for the opportunities we have for the education of our children. Yet we can not, and ought not, close our eyes to the fact that

in the school system of today there are many grave dangers to our young people—and we ought to faithfully and fearlessly face the facts and meet them. Among the unfavorable influences connected with present day school life are the following:

1. The Bible banished from nearly all the public schools.

2. Evolution and other anti-scriptural heresies found in our text and reference books and either taught or encouraged by many teachers.

3. Lack of religious training in the average school outside the denominational schools.

4. Immoral practices found in many communities.

5. The prominence given the dance and the military drill in places, being made practically compulsory in some schools.

6. The prominence given athletics in most schools. (We are not talking about healthful recreation, but about the sporting craze which in many schools makes athletics one of the most prominent features.)

7. The cultivation of vanity and pride—an influence which stands in direct conflict with the standards fostered in model Christian homes and churches.

Not all of these influences exist in all places; but they are in evidence in enough places to give all of them a standing among the things named as contributing to the dangerous influences com-

ing from the school atmosphere of the present time. In too many places there is a strange mixture of seeming religion, unbelief, socialism, rationalism, the sporting craze, and irreligion that has meant the spiritual downfall and ruin of many of our brightest young men and young women.

These facts emphasize the two things: (1) The need for special care, both on the part of young people and of parents and teachers, that the dangers connected with school life may be avoided and proper safeguards be provided; (2) the importance of well supported and efficiently manned denominational schools, where our young people may have proper training for life's duties without being subjected to the dangers found in connection with school life in so many communities.

We have this advice to give to Christian parents: If the high schools in your community are comparatively free from the objectionable influences named, if your children are disposed to be loyal to the home church and you have a controlling influence over them, and if community influences are not too unfavorable, keep them at home as long as you can. Otherwise, you can not afford, for the sake of saving a few dollars, to keep them in dangerous environments when you might save them for God and the Church by sending them to a school where the standards of the Bible and the Church are being maintained. Whether in school or out, help your children find such environments as will be conducive to the

formation of a sturdy Christian character and a stalwart Christian faith. A pure faith and a pure life are two things for which there are no acceptable substitutes.

Worldly Amusements

Another great danger confronting our young people is the pleasure-god which is claiming an increasing number of victims. Where one man seeks the house of prayer, dozens of them seek the house of mirth. Have you noticed the prominence given the sporting news in the daily newspapers? the eagerness with which many people watch for news from the sporting world? the large number of people who attend the Sunday afternoon ball games and frequent pleasure resorts as compared with those who attend services at the house of the Lord in the forenoon? the little time taken up in the average home or the average social circle in Bible study and spiritual conversation as compared with the time consumed in foolish nonsense? the tendency to make the public services at the house of the Lord entertaining rather than spiritually uplifting? the absorbing interest taken in prize fights and national games?

It is not an uncommon thing, in some schools, to witness a greater interest in athletic games and in theatricals than in any other thing connected with the institution. In some communities the idea of "having a good time" has gripped the body of young people so strongly that they have no

taste for anything but foolishness—and their church connections, if they have any, are simply nominal. Many people are unfitted for solid reading because their reading habits keep them pinned to the comic section in the newspaper, the silly novel, and news from the sporting world. As I write, my eye falls upon a daily paper that tells about “80,000 fans fighting wildly” to gain admittance to a well advertised prize-fight. A few years ago people almost gasped for breath when it was announced that one of “Billy” Sunday’s collections at the close of an eight-weeks evangelistic campaign amounted to more than \$100,000; yet a heavyweight champion would hardly look at a sum like that as proper compensation for a few hours’ boxing bout. An illustration showing how wild some people are after this kind of sport is furnished by the town of Shelby, Montana, which risked bankruptcy in order to have the honor of having a prize-fight staged at that place. Two of its banks were closed soon after because of financial losses through this fight. Several years ago I was called to a certain community to have a part in a religious service one Sunday morning. In the afternoon, as we were on the way to visit a sick brother, we passed by a park where there was a swimming pool and baseball diamond, and thousands of people had gathered there to see the sports. During the financial depression of several years ago, when starvation was staring thousands of people in the face, many of them got hold of enough money to keep up their habitual patronage

of theaters, movies, ball rooms, and other pleasure resorts.

Has everybody gone wild over this pleasure craze? No. There are yet seven thousand in Israel who have not bowed the knee to Baal. Many people are awake to the results of the lure of pleasure, and we are not without wholesome teaching along this line. But the facts as we have stated them exist, and the dangers connected with the evil should be pointed out. The average reader could, from personal knowledge, continue the list of illustrations, for the goddess of pleasure is everywhere in evidence. More people have laughed their way to hell, perhaps, than have gone there through any other route. "She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth."

In pointing out the evils of the sporting craze it should not be forgotten that pleasure in itself is not an evil. Happiness is one of God's great blessings, and God intends that it should be the lot of His people, both here and hereafter. Pleasure is right—provided that you take it in things that are pleasing to God, uplifting to the soul, strengthening to the character, conducive to the promotion of purity, righteousness, and greater love for God and godliness. It is a fact that in this life "a merry heart doeth good like a medicine," while in the life to come at the right hand of God "there are pleasures forevermore."

But it is not this kind of pleasure that is leading the world astray or against which we need to give any warning. Study the attractions which

hold the absorbing interest of worldlings—and, sad to say, of many church members—and you are impressed with the fact that they are all of a character which cause people to take less interest in real virtues and true Christian piety—which quench the spiritual life, make the religion of Jesus seem less attractive, and foster the spirit of giddiness, vanity, and ungodliness. The genuine sport and the consecrated Christian are not found in the same individual.

Immorality

There is a closer connection between this evil and the one just considered than most people are aware of. The oft-traveled road between the dance and the brothel is an illustration. Immorality is on the increase—so declared by all who have made a study of present conditions, and many of whom list the following as among the contributing causes:

1. Looseness in so-called high society.
2. Unbridled lust of men, coupled with commercialized vice.
3. The divorce evil.
4. Influence of the dance, the movie, and the public bathing resort.
5. Influence of immodest apparel—witnessed on the streets, in the social circle, and at public bathing resorts.
6. The decline of faith—which carries with it a lack of horror for sin.
7. The double social standard, which condones in man what it condemns in woman.

8. A general laxness because of all these influences combined.

We may not be able to remove all these causes, but we can at least see to it that none of these causes rests with us—that as individuals we live a pure and holy life, and use our testimony and influence on the right side. Too many people who are themselves morally pure are not careful enough about their own individual actions. They visit questionable amusement resorts because other people do. They appear in mixed company with exposed arms and bosoms and clothing otherwise that is not suggestive of modesty. They are not careful to entertain only pure thoughts in their own meditations and imaginations. It is too often the case that men who are known to live immoral lives are admitted in full standing into the society of respectable people. Though pure themselves, people thus carelessly put the stamp of approval on things that lead to immorality. When once all pure-minded men and women are awakened to the dangers lurking in such carelessness and inconsistencies, when we hear more definite teaching along these lines by parents, teachers, ministers, and leaders in society, we may expect to see the specter of immorality removed farther away from our doors.

Are we unduly alarmed about this great menacing evil at our doors? Perhaps some may think so. But there are a number of facts staring us in the face that are hard to overlook.

Every year thousands of young girls disappear, victims of the white slave traffic.

So common have venereal diseases become among men that health authorities have felt called upon to post notices in conspicuous places, giving warning to unsuspecting people, with directions as to what to do to get rid of such diseases.

While attempts are being made to confine fallen women to "red light" districts, no very serious attempt is made to restrain fallen men from entering such districts and carrying the pollen of disease into respectable homes.

Within the past year there have come reports from many communities in a number of states telling of numerous scandals connected with high school life.

In almost every community there are pleasure resorts which, if not vice breeders in themselves, are at least exerting an influence which trains their patrons for association with people of the underworld.

We know of places not a thousand miles from Mennonite communities where there is common talk of unsavory conduct among the young people.

Such things ought to at least make honest people think. And the time to begin in counteracting such influences is before our young people are tainted with such awful sins. That the tracks of the underworld are seen among the ranks of people of reputable character is evident from a number of things. Our newspapers tell us about:

the happenings at public bathing resorts, where men and women, boys and girls, two-thirds nude, tumble around promiscuously in the waters. Perhaps you have seen sights like this—people professing a high standard of social purity walking shamelessly on the streets of a town, with lower limbs bared far above the knees, walking to and fro from some public bathing resort. The prevailing fashions which call for bare arms and exposed bosoms on the part of women and girls in the social circle and the ever-growing tendency of women and girls to wear men's clothing would never be tolerated if it were not for the influence of low standards of dress upon the masses.

Our object in calling attention to these things is to stir up the pure minds of our people, young and old, against such immoral influences, if perchance some sleeping ones might be awakened to the dangers confronting the rising generation.

Influence of Literature

This is a reading age. People read dozens of books now where they read one a generation ago. But the danger consists not in the reading habit. On the other hand, reading should be encouraged. "Reading maketh a full man." When Paul admonished Timothy to "give attendance to reading," he gave him advice which all young Timothys of the present time should heed.

Yes, "reading maketh a full man," but—full of what? There is the point at issue.

Whatever gets into the mind leaves its im-

press upon the character. Keep this fact in mind, and direct the reading habits of your young people in a channel that their minds will be kept filled with the kind of things you would like to have shine out in their characters, in their lives.

The power of literature is evident when we consider the following:

Where church troubles exist—whether individual, congregational, or denominational—you invariably find trouble-making literature in the homes of the communities affected.

Many criminals get their suggestions in and trace their first steps downward to the literature they have read.

One typical illustration that now comes to my mind is the case of a young woman, reared in a Christian home, who went wrong mentally, morally, religiously. She traced her trouble to habitual novel-reading.

On the other hand, there are thousands who have been started upwards through the influence of some tract, book, paper, the Bible, or other literature leaving the right kind of impress upon the character. Whether for good or for evil, the pen is one of the most powerful weapons that can be placed in the hands of man.

The danger connected with the reading habit of the present lies in the fact that there are so many influences at work encouraging the reading of the wrong type of literature. The sensational novel, the sentimental love story, books making heroes of desperadoes and libertines, books that

are scripturally unsound, literature that is written in fascinating style but which fosters anti-Biblical standards in faith and life—this is the type of literature that comprises at least three-fourths of the literature got out during the last quarter century and engrosses perhaps nine-tenths of the time devoted to reading by the average reader. The great body of people who have gone wrong can point to the influence of literature as one of the contributing causes.

Tell me what you read, and I'll tell you what you are. Begin early the work of training your children to read the books and papers that are not only interesting but ennobling and scripturally sound and adapted to their real needs, and they will be safeguarded against not only one but a number of dangers confronting them.

The Spirit of Disloyalty

It is refreshing to go into communities where children are brought up in the spirit of "the first commandment with promise," and through obedience at home are prepared for a life of loyalty and submission to constituted authority, whether in home, community, Church, or nation.

But unfortunately there is another spirit at work. Several years ago a young people's number of a certain paper fell into my hands. This special edition was edited by a young man whom the regular editor recommended as being fair-minded, loyal to the Church, considerate of others' feelings, and safe as a leader and teacher. On ex-

aming the paper I found it full of criticisms for the old church, holding forth a number of its most cherished doctrines and standards of life as being impractical and out of date, and very gravely serving notice on the powers that be in that denomination that the new order of affairs must rule if the Church is to prosper—in short, it was an exposition of Modernism from beginning to end.

Let it not be forgotten that the chief hope of Modernism is that of turning young people against their elders, especially those who are not minded to look with favor upon the present day apostasy from the genuine Christian faith. The experience of men of long and faithful service is discredited, and with combined flattery of young people and assumption of superior judgment and knowledge on the part of the critics, a bold bid is made to young people to turn from the old to the new order of affairs. Our own church has not altogether escaped the effects of such propaganda.

One of the most cunningly devised methods used to bring about the alienation of the affections and loyalty of young people from their church is to lead them to have a perverted view of their church leaders and overseers. In this connection let me set forth two views of Church officials, bishops, leaders, and others in positions of responsibility and authority in the Church:

1. One view is that they are human, like ourselves, having their shortcomings, and liable to err. But along with these imperfections they are, as a class, God-fearing men, standing for the pure and

undefiled religion of Jesus Christ, consecrated and self-sacrificing, burdened for the welfare of the Church, doing what they can that the cause of Christ may prosper and that sinners may be won for Christ, zealous in maintaining the purity and faithfulness of the entire membership, that the Church may prosper and be kept safe for loyal submission to "all the counsel of God."

2. The other is that they are self-seekers, insincere, designing politicians; jealous of those who could manage the affairs of the Church much better than they; dishonest, narrow, reactionary, determined to keep things in their own hands; autocratic, cliquing together to throttle anything and everything that is not to their own liking or after their own pattern.

It goes without saying that the first view encourages those who hold it to look with sympathy upon the Church and its overseers, fosters the spirit of loyalty to the Church and its enterprises, of loyalty to the Bible and to those who have dedicated their lives to the cause of maintaining Bible standards; while the second view (now whispered more loudly than it used to be) stands directly in the way of not only sympathy and loyalty but also of unity with and usefulness to the Church on the part of all who entertain it. Another fact just as apparent to impartial observers is that all who entertain the second view belong to one of two classes; They are either out of line with and antagonistic to the standards of the Church with

reference to doctrine and life, or they are under the influence of those who are.

We owe it as a duty to our young people to give them a correct and sympathetic view of their Church—of its doctrines, its different lines of activity, its institutions, its conferences, its overseers, its leaders, its burden-bearers, its young people, its efforts to keep the whole body in the faith of the Gospel and service of Jesus Christ, its endeavors to bring the Gospel of Christ to all people. Let parents, preachers, teachers, and leaders in the various activities of the Church do their full duty along this line, and our young people will be saved from the blighting, paralyzing, soul-destroying effect of the spirit of CRITICISM so prevalent at the present time. The spirit of dissatisfaction is the hotbed where more dissatisfaction is hatched out. "Like begets like."

Spiritual Indifference

This world is moving at a tremendously rapid rate. With our automobiles, radios, modern conveniences in the home, high taxes to keep up roads, schools, and war expenses, luxuries without number, we must put in all available time to "make ends meet" financially. This, added to world attractions, is responsible for a widespread neglect of spiritual duties and means of grace, which accounts for much of the spiritual indifference of today. In many homes, communities, and churches religion is little more than a mere form, and children are allowed to grow up with their

spiritual training neglected. In the general indifference to matters spiritual, as compared with a correspondingly great interest in the things of this world, we find one of the greatest dangers to the rising generation.

* * *

Do you call this a dark picture of present world conditions? So do I. But every one who has made a study of these things knows that the picture is not overdrawn—knows that these threatening evils exist, and that the language used in warning against them is mild compared with what might have been said and still remain within the bounds of truth. Don't say that there is no danger. Don't make the inexcusable blunder of trying to throw our young people off their guard, through flattery and vain neglect, and thus lead some of them to believe that they are too intelligent and well fortified to be concerned about withstanding the temptations which are the common lot of men to face. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." We have seen too many of our young people (bright ones along with the dull ones) and too many older people as well whom everybody thought were well established in character and knowledge, fall victims to the world's vain allurements because they permitted these ravening wolves in sheeps' clothing to slip up on the blind side of them and carry them away into lives of ungodliness and folly.

"What I say unto you, I say unto you all, Watch."

But while we recognize that "the whole world

lieth in wickedness," we also bear in mind the many promises of God to care for His own. It is not for us, therefore, to take a pessimistic attitude and make no effort to maintain the purity of our faith and to hold our young people for God and the Church. God has manifested His power and His grace on numberless occasions, and there is no reason why we should falter in the sacred charge committed to us with reference to our young people. They present to us the three-fold appeal of (1) the preciousness of their souls, (2) the satisfaction of their associations and help, and (3) the fact that in them rests the salvation of the future Church. Given a good chance, the body of them will remain true, pure, loyal, and will not disappoint us in what we expect of them. Next to God, we live for them; that He through them may send the message of salvation to the ends of the earth and hand it down to generations yet unborn.

But let none of us be lulled to sleep in the delusive hope that our young people have a good chance in life so long as the dangers herein pointed out are ignored. We must face the facts as they are. We who are older must not only set examples of true Christian piety and consistent daily living, but we must be awake, alert, and while calm and trustful we must not forget to sound the note of warning in every time of danger. As tourists speeding along the public highways ought to be very grateful for the many danger signals along the way, so ought our young people be grateful for the danger signals held forth by men and

women who have traveled the way before and know there is danger at every curve. Let the training of our children begin with infancy and continue until they have arrived at maturity in years and understanding and the responsibilities of life are resting upon their shoulders. Then, under the providence of God, having been taught the way of life, being trained in Christian life and service, being forearmed because forewarned, and having learned not to trifle with sin, we expect them to be

“.....no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things,”

and as pillars of the faith and service withstand the temptations of this world. With the full armor of God as our protection, the many promises of God as our encouragement, and the Holy Ghost as our Comforter and Guide, there is no reason why we should not face the future with hope, having the blessed assurance that our “labor is not in vain in the Lord.” As light always dispels darkness, so “Let there be light” in every individual heart, in every home, in every community where God has any people through whom this light may shine.

In succeeding chapters we shall discuss these matters in greater detail, showing what may be done by the **Church**, by the **Christian home**, by our **mission boards**, by our **publication interests**,

and by our schools to build up and prepare our young people for service, to strengthen the Church and extend its borders, to carry the Gospel of Christ into the dark corners of earth. Let each of these do their full part in the heaven-approved way, and our problems will be well on their way to a happy solution.

THE MENNONITE CHURCH

The discussions in this chapter will not be very much different from what they would be had we taken some other denominational name as the chapter head. Many of the issues before us are similar to those confronting any other evangelical denomination. But because our readers will be largely Mennonite it is the Mennonite Church that we have in mind when we say, "The Church."

Every church has its standard, its ideals of doctrine, life, and service. You ask the average Mennonite what he thinks the Mennonite standard should be, and you are likely to get something like this for your answer:

1. A church whose standards are identical with the standard of the Gospel.

2. A membership composed of people who have been "born again," whose daily record gives evidence of purity, holiness, devotion to truth and righteousness, desire to be of use to others.

3. An aggressive missionary spirit having for its purpose the preaching of "the gospel to every creature," to "all nations."

4. The bringing up and training of our young people to the end that this same standard may be maintained in succeeding generations.

This chapter will be devoted to a discussion of the question, What can the Mennonite Church do in the way of maintaining this standard?

Faithfulness to the Head

Recognizing Jesus Christ as the Head of the Church (according to Scripture) there can be no proper functioning of the body without a proper recognition, by the members of this body, of the place and office which naturally belongs to this Head, "that in all things he might have the pre-eminence." This means—

1. An exaltation of Christ in our own hearts and before the eyes of the people.

2. Obedience to all His commandments, submission to His will.

3. Acceptance of the entire Gospel of Christ, making that the rule of our lives.

4. Rejection of everything that is contrary to this Gospel.

5. Maintaining the standard of the Gospel wherever we go, with our lives upon the altar of service, seeking to improve every opportunity to win souls for Christ and build them up in Christ.

Proper Church Organization

In writing to the Church at Ephesus on this subject, Paul says:

"And he (God) gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every

wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

This wonderful declaration must be prayerfully studied before it can be appreciated or understood. Notice—

1. That God is the Author of Church organization.

2. That while the Church casts her voice and elders lay on hands, ordained men, if set apart according to Scripture, get their call and commission from God who works through the instrumentality of the Church.

3. That Church organization is simply a means to an end—the edification of the Church and strengthening of every member, a proper indoctrination of members and growth of the body—and not an end in itself.

4. That "unity of the Spirit" and "unity of the faith" are the natural results of proper organization and care.

5. That we may look for growth "in all things" when God has His full way in the organization and work of the Church.

Every church is properly organized when scriptural methods are used, when there is actual need for every official chosen, when the leadership of faithful overseers is recognized on the part of

the membership, when proper provision is made for work for every member.

Proper Pastoral Oversight

Christ as "the Good Shepherd" has His representatives in the overseers of the churches. Their duties are thus enjoined upon them by the beloved apostles, Paul and Peter:

"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.....Watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry."

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

"Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock."

A minister's work is not completed when he delivers his weekly messages to the congregation. "Taking the oversight thereof," means a prayerful study of his congregation as well as of the Bible, that proper food may be handed out over the pulpit. It means a vigilant care over the flock, helping those in difficulty, encouraging the faithful, strengthening the weak, befriending those under temptation. The faithful overseer watches over his flock, keeps the sheep and lambs on nourishing pasture, looks for opportunities, maintains a vigilant lookout for enemies, goes after those who

have wandered away on forbidden pastures or into dangerous places. Let the membership stand together and see to it that it is financially and physically possible for their overseer to do these things without hindrance.

Proper Home Training

Of this we shall speak in the next chapter. Suffice it to say here that the condition of the average home is an accurate index to the condition of the Church. Let ministers and members cooperate in the effort to maintain conditions in each home favorable to the development of Christian character, the spirit of loyalty to home and Church, and proper respect for constituted authority. This done in every home, and the load of the Church is considerably lightened.

Proper Discipline

No church can hope to prosper long without the exercise of faithful discipline among its members. Where children are denied the privilege of a wholesome, restraining discipline, they usually "grow up wild." The same is true of members in any church.

Discipline includes more than punishment for evil-doing. But where evil-doing is present, and there is no attempt to correct, there is a demoralizing influence present that can not fail to break down the morale among the membership. Of this we have a number of vivid illustrations in the Church at the present time. It is in congregations

and communities where there was the greatest disposition to be "lenient" with disobedient members that the greatest difficulty is found in keeping members loyal in the Church. "A stitch in time saves nine." One excommunication ten years ago might have saved the necessity for excommunicating ten members today.

Church discipline, to be effective, must be stable as well as scriptural. To be scriptural a conference or congregational rule need not be couched in the exact language of Scripture but it must not be anti-scriptural and, to be of value, must be an application of some scriptural truth or principle. No loyal member will withstand the Church so long as it follows this rule. But no rule, however excellent and scriptural, is of much value unless it is obeyed. It is an evidence of weakness for a congregation or church to waver whenever it has one or more unruly members on hand; and very demoralizing when members generally are disposed to take the side of the transgressor as against the Church when it undertakes to discipline an unruly member.

The Bible has three rules that will be sufficient to handle all personal difficulties in the Church, provided that in all cases the application is made in faith and in the spirit of the Gospel. You will find them in Matt. 5:23, 24, Matt. 18:15-17, and Gal. 6:1, 2. And let it never be forgotten that to tolerate in the Church members who are wilfully disobedient means to nurse an influence

that sooner or later will develop into sedition and anarchy.

That church is governed best where discipline is regarded as a training and restraining influence rather than merely a punishment for evil-doing. We need rules, and those violating them should be made to feel the gravity of their sins; but better still is the restraining influence and training which keeps us in our proper places so completely that we need never feel the lash of the law because of our disobedience. The law is for the lawless; but grace is reserved for those who have a desire to know and to do God's will.

Proper Indoctrination

Here are a few quotations from Scripture showing an ideal state of indoctrination as viewed from the standpoint of inspired writers:

"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily."

"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."

"For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God."

"Give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine."

"Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear."

“Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.”

As Mennonites we ought to be able to tell—

Why we united with the Mennonite Church, and not some other church;

Why we believe in a Triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost;

Why we believe in living a pure, simple, sinless, holy, consecrated life;

Why we believe in the distinctive doctrines of our church—such as baptism by pouring, “close” communion, feet washing, the Christian woman’s devotional covering, nonconformity, non-resistance, non-secrecy—and many other things which the Bible teaches and to which Christian people should be ready to testify whenever called upon.

These things should be on our tongues’ end, not merely because they are “Mennonite doctrine,” but because they are a part of the “all scripture” which we are taught is “profitable for doctrine” and fill an important place in the plan and knowledge and work of God.

Proper indoctrination includes more than a knowledge and acceptance of the tenets of faith peculiar to one’s own church. It means a wholesome knowledge of the Scriptures, so far as man is able to grasp them; that the Word of God has a prominent place in the hearts and lives of the membership. A faithful effort should be made in every congregation, in every home, in the individ-

ual efforts of every member to have an understanding, working knowledge of the Bible. It means better Christians; it means more effective workers. Every preacher, after a number of years' experience, ought to be able to say, "I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." Wholesome teaching from the pulpit, in the Sunday school class, in other religious meetings, in the home circle, and wherever there is opportunity will bring about a scriptural indoctrination that includes the whole Bible from end to end. This, backed up by consistent living, will mean a power in every community where this is faithfully done.

Proper Conservation of Forces

"Forces" here includes people, means, and opportunities. In every congregation there should be an honest, earnest, consecrated, continual effort made to keep every member, every dollar within our stewardship, and every opportunity to advance the cause of Christ, upon the altar of the Lord. This means—

1. That there should be a place for every member, and every member in his place.

2. That every dollar spent should be so placed that we can honestly say that we believe that it was spent for the most needy purpose and in the best way, under the circumstances.

3. That a united, untiring effort should be made to enlist the interest and services of indifferent members.

4. That special attention should be given to young people, that they may be started right and kept going in the right direction.

5. That no opportunity should be lost to win those who are not of our fold but who rightfully belong there.

You strengthen the congregation when you put every member and every dollar in his possession to talking for God. And when you strengthen the congregation you also strengthen the Church at large.

There is a double advantage in keeping your young people busy along lines which will add something to stability of character and knowledge of God's Word. It affords an outlet for surplus energy and means a development that adds to capacity for service. It means that many more active workers for God and the Church and thus strengthens the cause. Some of the things to encourage in every congregation are weekly Bible classes, mission study classes, teacher training classes, community singings (which measure up to the spirit of I Cor. 10:31), Sunday schools in neglected nearby fields, and every other kind of gathering which is conducive to spiritual growth and the building up of a sturdy Christian character. From this variety of activities every congregation should be able to choose one or more lines of service that ought to keep the workers employed at something the year round. While such forms of activity serve as an excellent antidote for activities that are ruinous to the character

and destructive to spiritual life, they ought to be encouraged for what they contribute to young people rather than as expedients to keep them out of trouble.

Aggressive Evangelism

A proper conservation of forces is impossible unless we have a distinct object in view. The miser who hoards his gold and never lets it go out of its chest is as distinct a failure as is the man who never succeeds in getting any money to hoard. In like manner, the church that piles up members without an attempt to use this combined membership in a heaven-directed effort to win lost souls for God is as distinct a failure, in God's sight, as is the church that fails to add to its membership. Andrew did the practical thing when he brought his brother Peter to Christ; Philip, when he brought Nathaniel; Philip the evangelist, when he guided the Ethiopian eunuch into the way of salvation; the church in Mary's house, when it prayed Peter out of prison; Aquila and Priscilla, when they showed the eloquent Apollos the way of the Lord more perfectly. In every community there is enough work—in the way of visiting the sick, caring for the needy, doing personal work with the sinner, arousing the indifferent, getting non-attendants to church, supporting the weak, carrying the light into neglected places in nearby fields, preparing one's self for more efficient work, encouraging and strengthening one another in Christian fellowship—to keep all members busy, at

all times. And if, perchance, there should be more members in any community than there is work to do there, there are too many needy communities where more workers are needed, to justify any member in settling down in a life of ease and self-indulgence. Let the consecrated members who find themselves without anything to do move into some needy community.

In every community there should be an aggressive evangelism, a continual working for the Lord, at all times. It means not only the winning of the lost but the strengthening of those who are already in the fold. The periodic revival meeting should be both a harvest of grain resulting from a year of seed-sowing and a preparation for another long season of seed-sowing to follow. Successful evangelism means more than getting people into the Church; it means, also, the building up of those already in the fold.

Freedom From Entangling Alliances

“Be ye also enlarged,” said Paul just before counseling a course of action which the average churchman pronounces very “narrow” and “small.” Here is the advice: “**Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers,**” following this declaration of Christian freedom with a number of searching questions:

What **fellowship** hath righteousness with unrighteousness?

What **communion** hath light with darkness?

What **concord** hath Christ with Belial?

What **part** hath he that believeth with an infidel?

What **agreement** hath the temple of God with idols?

One of the greatest of modern curses is the disposition of individuals and of churches to compromise with evil. In this spirit of compromise we find believer and unbeliever yoked together in marriage, in business partnerships, in the secret lodge, in fraternal organizations, in politics, in the social circle. In this same spirit we find churches that formerly were solid on the fundamentals of the Christian faith yoked up with more liberal churches in church federations. Such alliances are not only contrary to God's Word but they are the most fruitful causes of leading the faithful away from the whole-Bible foundation, crippling them in power for service and entangling them in positively unscriptural enterprises and practices. Professing great admiration for the spirit of "toleration," federationists are very tolerant with every popular error that seems to offer advantages—and the more tolerant they become toward error, the more intolerant they are toward those who maintain the genuine Christian faith. If the Mennonite Church is wise, it will never allow itself to be drawn into the maelstrom of present day church federation. Having a distinct mission to perform and holding to a number of clearly taught Bible doctrines which popular churches oppose, we can do nothing better than to stand for these distinctive doctrines, remembering that we as a church have a work that is distinctively our own. This we can do and still be neighborly and

sympathetic toward other bodies which, in their own way, are standing for things which they believe the Bible enjoins.

The doctrines which Christ proclaimed were not popular in His day, and these same truths are as unpopular today as they were then. In a federation of churches, therefore, we would have everything to lose and nothing to gain. The only ground upon which churches can federate is to unite upon the full Gospel of Christ, in the unity of the faith and of the Spirit, making Gospel truth rather than the elimination of denominational differences the basis for such union.

The Spirit of Loyalty

should be cultivated in every congregation, in every home, in every individual member. During the Russo-Japanese War an organization of Russian Nihilist students sent a long message to the mikado of Japan expressing sympathy with Japan in the struggle. The old emperor replied, thanking them for their sympathy, and then closed by thanking God that he had no such subjects. Japan won the war, largely because of the loyalty of the Japanese and the disloyalty of the Russians. In like manner, a church is usually successful or unsuccessful, depending upon whether its members are loyal or disloyal.

For the sake of the individual members, for the sake of the congregation, for the sake of the Church at large, for the sake of power with God and man in the work of winning the lost to Jesus,

it is important that the spirit of loyalty be fostered among the members, be they few or many. Let our loyalty to Christ keep us in an obedient attitude toward Him, in a frame of mind and heart to study and appreciate His Gospel; our loyalty to the Church keep us in a friendly attitude toward its doctrines and its enterprises; our loyalty to the constituted authorities in the Church keep us in an attitude of hearty support of whatever they undertake in harmony with the Word of God and the voice of the Church. We know of no better way of cultivating this spirit of loyalty than to make the Bible, the Church, our home congregations, our church institutions, and the enterprises of the Church subjects of frequent conversation and prayer. When every member in the Church is in a mood to put on the whole armor of God and fight the good fight of faith in fellowship and harmony with the other members of the Church, we may expect a revival wave which will sweep many souls into the Kingdom of our Lord.

To maintain the spirit of loyalty among the rank and file of the members it is essential that the Church be kept under the oversight and leadership of loyal men. One disloyal man at the head of a congregation or institution can do more harm than dozens of faithful men in the ranks are able to undo. Let diligent care be exercised, therefore, that our congregations and institutions are kept under the leadership of God-called men who are not only not antagonistic toward their

church but who from the heart honestly believe the things which the Church teaches and are in harmony with its discipline. It is seldom that you see a divided church where there is a united leadership.

Progress During the Past Half Century

Is our church making progress? In some ways, yes; in other ways, no. During the past half century there has been a remarkable growth in effective organization and aggressive Christian work. This growth might have been still more marked had the spirit of loyalty to the doctrinal standards and ideals of the Mennonite Church kept pace with the progress along other lines.

Our general Mission Board has grown from an evangelizing committee in 1882 to the present Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities, which organization is now supported by a district Mission Board in each of our conference districts. Under its auspices (including also a number of institutions supported by district organizations) mission stations and conferences have been organized in two foreign countries, organized mission work is carried on in fifteen cities in the home land, organized charitable work is carried on in seven institutions, and, in co-operation with the Mennonite Relief Commission for War Sufferers, relief work has been and is supported by workers and means in a number of war-stricken countries.

What is true of the expansion of missionary activities in the Church is true also of the publi-

cation and educational interests. It was in 1907 when the Mennonite Publication Board was organized, and the following spring the publication interests of the Church were taken over by that body. Since that time the value of the Mennonite Publishing House has increased from about \$20,000 to \$235,000, and our publications have more than doubled, both in the number of publications and in the extent of their circulation. A similar growth may be recorded in our educational interests, as will be shown in a succeeding chapter.

Let no one get the idea, however, that there has been an uninterrupted growth without any reverses. There never has been a case of overcoming without a struggle, no struggle without losses. Churches have been abandoned, missions have been closed, members have forsaken the faith, strife has hindered progress, congregations have dwindled in numbers, not one of our church activities but that has met with opposition and at times suffered reverses.

But taking the Church as a whole, as already noted, there has been a substantial growth. Notwithstanding the many brethren and sisters called to their eternal home, there has been an increase in membership. Some of the losses noted are accounted for by a transfer of labors from one field to another. Our sphere of activities is expanding, and as our workers are becoming more familiar with their tasks their efficiency is increasing. Open doors are before us, and may our daily prayers ascend to the Lord of the harvest to the end

that laborers and means may be forthcoming to enter them. The fact that, as a rule, where superintendents and others in charge of our Church enterprises were sound in the faith, loyal to the Church, scripturally qualified to fill their places, and untiring in their efforts there has been substantial work accomplished for the Master, ought to give us courage to press on, looking heavenward for results and for our inspiration and hope of eternal reward.

One of the most powerful factors in promoting the interests of the cause of Christ through the instrumentality of the Mennonite Church is the Mennonite General Conference. This body was organized at a preliminary meeting held near Elida, Ohio, in 1897, its first regular meeting was held near Wakarusa, Indiana, in 1898, and is now being held biennially.

The most essential gauge of progress, to determine whether our progress has been forward or backwards, is the standard of the Gospel. Not numbers, not material wealth, not advancements according to the standards of this world, but a growing in grace and a knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (II Pet. 3:18) is the true test of progress. It is only as we get nearer to God, our life corresponds more completely to His Word, and there is a growing tendency among our people generally to become more loyal to the standards of the Gospel and of the Church that we can truly be said to be making progress. As a church we need to move farther away from the

borderland of worldliness and sin. If, by the grace of God, we will maintain our position as a distinct and separate people, not encumbered with the entanglements of this world, free from sin and waging an aggressive warfare in behalf of the salvation of the lost of earth, we may expect the blessings of God to rest upon our labors.

THE CHRISTIAN HOME

Abraham was the chosen of God, called out from among his kindred to become the head of a family of nations; and through his seed should all the nations of the earth be blessed, because God saw in him the character and loyalty needed for such distinction. Of this "father of the faithful," God said:

"For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him."

Joshua, who with Caleb "wholly followed the Lord," after leading his people into the land of promise, dividing the land among the tribes of Israel, and bringing about order among his people, delivered his farewell address, saying, among other things:

"Choose ye this day whom ye will serve.....as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

Cornelius, though a Roman centurion and as yet without the fold of Christ, had nevertheless witnessed enough of the true religion to lead him to become a seeker for the truth and a man of prayer in his own home. God heard his prayers and led him to the light—as He will every sincere seeker after the way of salvation. When Peter came from Joppa Cornelius was able to testify:

“Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, and said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God.”

These are a few among many illustrations which impress us with the importance and blessedness of the home dedicated unto the Lord. It is right that we should give the best thought of our lives and our most consecrated endeavors to the Church; but no church, however great the sacrifices in its behalf, can long prosper without favorable conditions in the homes which give it support. When the home is what it should be the greater portion of the problems of the Church are solved.

The first requisite of the Christian home is that it should be

A House of Prayer

It is needless to emphasize this fact, or to attempt reasons why it is necessary or important. In every home there should be a family altar. Just how and at what hour of the day this worship should be conducted is of secondary importance. The individuality of the members of the household, the nature of the occupation, and other circumstances should determine matters of detail. Every home should have an altar of devotion, dating from the beginning of family life and contin-

uing until the last member of the family has been promoted to the home beyond.

The Daily Conversation

This, next to the matter of keeping up a daily devotion to and fellowship and communion with God, is the greatest character-forming power in the home. Tell me what you talk about in your daily family conversations, and I'll tell you what kind of a family you are bringing up. Do you want your boy and girl to grow up for God? to develop into a manly man and a womanly woman, pureminded and loyal, devoted to God and the Church, active in the moral and spiritual uplift of others, taking the right side on all questions that come up in life? Then see to it that in your daily conversations in the home the things that are conducive to that kind of results are spoken of frequently and approvingly, remembering that your life must give emphasis to your words.

Your Vision of the Future

We all have visions—the difference is that some people's visions soar higher than those of others. Some people's visions are circumscribed by \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$, others by pleasure, others by ambition, others by a lust for power, while the visions of others soar to the realms of glory. These set their "affections on things above," and look upon this earth as a mere place of opportunity, a stepping-stone to the brighter world above. Evidences as to the kind of visions which your boy and girl entertain may be brought out by the

question as to what they expect to do or be when they "get big." When you have as your vision of the future a life of service to God and man, followed by an eternity of glory in the presence of and fellowship with God and the heavenly hosts, it will not only make the right kind of an impress upon your own life and character but a similar influence will be exerted upon others with whom you associate. It is fortunate for children who are brought up in homes where such visions are entertained and fostered.

Your Literature

Another important factor in the bringing up of children for God is the kind of literature which you have in your home. A half hour with your library, a few moments looking over the periodicals on your center table, is all the evidence needed to determine the kind of family you are bringing up. These things will tell you whether you are heavenly or earthly minded; whether the chief attraction for you and your family is religion, pleasure, wealth, politics, or something else; whether you value your own church above or below other churches; whether you consider salvation, or something else, to be your chief concern. How? In the first place, your own tastes lead you to a kind of literature you like. Then the longer you give yourself over to a certain type of literature the more you will be influenced by it and your life and character shaped accordingly.

It is not merely a question as to the kind of

literature you have in your home—doubtless you have a variety of it; but which kind lies on top? which kind is used the most? It is quite frequently that you will find numerous Bibles and the entire stock of church literature in some home, but they are seldom read, as some other kind of literature holds the affections and claims the time of the reading members of the family.

The rest of our literature story is brief. Determine what you want your boy and girl to be, then begin early in life to keep them supplied with reading matter calculated to develop the kind of character and life desired.

Daily Habits

Habit is the inerita of life. It is a powerful factor in moulding the character and shaping the destinies of our young people. Encourage, therefore, the forming of such habits in early childhood as will start the child in the right direction. Among these are habitual cheerfulness, seriousness, purity, devotion to truth, holiness, generosity, economy, humility, spirituality, diligence, frugality, hard work, patience, firmness, and other things that belong to a useful Christian life. Let these habits be fixed in the early life of your children, and when they grow up and learn about what you did for them, they will rise up and call you blessed.

Associations

This is an important thing which should receive the early attention of parents. The sooner

you begin on this problem the more perfectly you may control it as your family becomes larger. It should be the burden of all parents, (1) that their children have associations; (2) that the character of these associations should be such that both home folks and visitors will be morally and spiritually benefited by them. There are two ways of being "choicy" about associations. One is to be so squeamish about it as to be selfish; the other, to keep the home in such fine spiritual condition that only those who enjoy that kind of an atmosphere will be drawn to it. Every Christian home should have a high and positive standard of Christian sociability, and no other thought ever entertained but that this standard will be adhered to no matter who enters the home. Christian hospitality means that everybody is welcome there and will be made to feel at home—provided, of course, that those who accept the hospitality conform to the standard of purity consistent for a Christian home. Keeping late hours should be discouraged, and associations (upon a plane of social equality) with people of tainted morals should not be permitted or even thought of.

Entertainment

We are all interested in having our homes attractive, agreeable, hospitable, entertaining; but we are not all agreed as to what to admit or encourage in the home so as to make it pleasant or entertaining. What the children delight in is partly a matter of taste, but more largely a matter of

education. The fads of the day are the things which many people think they must have or life is a dreary drudge. Thus what is considered by some as absolutely necessary to make home entertaining in one age is entirely discarded in another generation. Reason: people were taught to look upon these things as necessary, whereas they were simply fads of the day.

One of the mistakes of the present day is to think that about all the objectionable amusements are found in cards, theatricals, and the dance. There is no question about these being objectionable, but they are simply conspicuous examples of a class. Here are a few test questions by which we may classify all things entertaining:

1. Are they to the glory of God?
2. Does indulgence in them make people love God more or less?
3. Do they mix well with the spirit of piety and true devotion?
4. What classes of people, as a rule, are their most devoted patrons?
5. Do they contribute to soberness or to giddiness?
6. Judged by Bible standards, is their influence uplifting or degrading?

Another mistake which many people make is to admit into their homes, games and amusements that they would discourage elsewhere. They make provisions for cards, billiards, etc., in the home, so that the children may have something to amuse themselves there and thus be kept away from

sporting places. And by so doing they simply educate their children to become sports and thus add to the temptation to frequent these resorts. If the games played around the gambling table are wicked, for the sake of your children teach them that these games are wicked in the home.

If you would train your children for God, begin early to bring them up in ways that are pleasing in His sight. And the first thing you want to fight is the devil's lie that children can have pleasure only by indulging in foolishness, vanity, and ungodliness. Yes, you want to make both home and life pleasant for your children. By your own cheerful, buoyant, and at the same time sober, sensible life, you want to show by your example that it is possible to be both pleasant and sensible. A peaceable, loving disposition on the part of parents, cheerful conversation, wholesome literature, pure associations, much singing, industrious habits and at the same time enough room for recreation, parental interest and encouragement in the pleasure and well being of the children, wholesome instruction and heart-to-heart discussions on the problems, dangers, and opportunities of life, home conveniently arranged for the convenience and comfort of all—these are a few of the things that enter into making home satisfactory, pleasant, and helpful.

Godliness and cheerfulness make a much better mixture than worldliness and "fun." The first is an earnest of the joy of the Lord; the second puts a premium on foolishness and ungodliness.

Christian Service

From infancy up the child should be trained for usefulness. When God commanded that man should eat his bread in the sweat of his face He meant more than a mere punishment for disobedience. It is an essential part of a life of usefulness and true happiness. Idleness, for children, means not only failure to prepare to meet the issues of life successfully, but it also means that the door of temptation is thrown wide open and many lives blasted by immorality. Little tasks should be given children in early years, and at every opportunity they should be taught to work with their hands. Here are a few advantages:

1. It strengthens the physical, intellectual, and moral man.
2. It encourages the development of useful traits of character.
3. It gives the child a taste of real life.
4. It is an economic advantage to the family.
5. It encourages ideas of usefulness and helpfulness.
6. It trains the child to provide for his own support, and the support of others, later on in life.
7. It is in accordance with the commands of God.

Our young people should not only be permitted to take part in but trained for Christian service. Gradually the responsibilities of life should be laid upon them. It is right that in early childhood they should be permitted to run to their

parents for nickels and dimes to put into the Lord's treasury, but as they grow older they should be encouraged to earn their own money and thus early learn to know what it means to give from their own earnings. In the Sunday school and other public gatherings they should not only learn how to behave themselves in the house of the Lord, but also taught to use their influence in behalf of others maintaining a like deportment. So with all other lines of activity. Let them be encouraged to do their best in service as well as in living. With proper safeguards thrown around them while in the formative periods of their lives, let them early be thrown upon their own resources as far as safety and wisdom will permit, so that when they come to years of maturity they will already have developed traits of character and habits in life that will enable them to withstand temptation and bear the trials of life in a way that will be a glory to God and strength to His cause. The Christian home is a fruitful field for the formation of such habits.

Heavenly Sunlight

In the home, as in the Church, life is not normal unless it is surrounded by heavenly influences. The same God who brought us into existence has also promised never to leave nor forsake His own. Give Him a place in your life and in your home, and He will abundantly justify the confidence you place in Him. Heavenly sunlight means pure joy—it means much more. Just as you see the

beautiful sunlight filling the earth with cheer and gladness, so the sunlight of heaven brings into each home and each heart a kind of cheer and gladness that nothing else can bring. But it does not stop here. The light of the sun causes growth, imparts warmth, dispels gloom, conveys power—without it earth would not only be a cheerless place but also a barren desert. In like manner the sunshine of heaven does not only fill the soul with “a joy unspeakable and full of glory,” but it is also a means of power, of growth, of usefulness for each member of the family. Let your home be open to this illuminating stream of sunshine, and both the members of your own household and the strangers within your gates will be blessed. The home is a window through which God may shine into the Church, a way-station from which the light of life may shine out to illuminate and gladden the dark places within reach.

OUR PLACE IN THE MISSION FIELD

Why should the Mennonite Church engage in mission work?

This is no longer a debated question among us. So unmistakably clear is the voice of God—through the written Word, through the work of the Holy Spirit, through the world-wide Macedonian call of “Come and help us”—that the burden to bring “the glad tidings of salvation” to the perishing millions in neglected communities and countries is everywhere felt.

But there was a time when many of our well meaning people did not believe in missions. It was not that they were indifferent to the cause of salvation or unwilling to make sacrifices for the furtherance of this cause. Many of them lived a life of self-denial, making sacrifices which few of our most enthusiastic promoters of missions to-day would care to make. But they were used to a different way of working from that in which mission work generally is carried on. Moreover, the idea of “missions,” to them, was “something new”—something supported, in the main, by those who were not willing to obey all the commandments of our Lord. So it was not indifference or selfishness that made the more consecrated among opponents of missions take the attitude that they did, but as they wanted to do that only which

was pleasing to God, it required some time to make it clear to them that mission work is in harmony with the faith which they had so earnestly espoused. As we can say amen to the messages sent forth by our forefathers, so we believe they would heartily sanction and support our efforts today for the ingathering of the lost, were they alive at this time, and active in the work of the Church as they were in their day.

Our Mission Activities

are being carried on today under the auspices of the Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities—a Church-wide organization—and correspondingly active Mission Boards in practically all of our conference districts. So extensive has been the work of our General Board that its executive committee meets once a month to attend to the necessary details of the work. The district Boards likewise have been quite active, the Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities (being the district Board in the largest of our conferences) having charge of a number of missions and liberally supporting relief work. There is a very close cooperation between our General and district Mission Boards, the latter being represented on the Board of Trustees in the former. About a half million dollars annually are dedicated to the support of our mission and charitable work. There are a number of

Reasons Why

the Mennonite Church should continue its mis-

sionary activities and further extend the work.

1. It is the Lord's command.

The last great command of our Lord and Savior—"Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature"—is still in force.

2. It is in accord with the spirit of our Savior and Redeemer.

He left the courts of glory on His sacred mission of bringing salvation to the lost of earth. He spent His life in that cause. He laid down His life for our sakes. He lived as He taught, and His Great Commission to the Church was but the breathing forth of the burden of His heart. Let us "follow in his steps."

3. The heathen are lost without the Gospel.

"No man," says Christ, "cometh unto the Father but by me." The Bible is emphatic in its teaching that "man is justified by faith alone," that "faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God," that if we say we have fellowship with God and walk in darkness "we lie, and do not the truth;" and it puts us face to face with this searching question: "How shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?" No man of God can look at the sad picture of a lost world (millions of people without even a knowledge of the Christ who came to save) sinking into a Christless grave and going on to a Christless eternity without, like our blessed Savior, being "moved with compassion." Let us translate this "compassion" into works.

4. It is essential that the whole Gospel be included in the missionary message.

This, sad to say, is neglected or evaded by many who pose as missionaries of the cross. In a recent article which came to our notice mention is made of a questionnaire that was sent to fourteen Christian colleges in China. The answers showed that all but two or three of them were tainted with unbelief. Where is the power in the missionary message that ignores the Deity of Christ, the atonement through the shedding of His blood, the authority of Scripture, the awful fact that "the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God?" What good is there in the message that ignores the "all things whatsoever" which our Savior commanded His disciples to teach to "all nations?" If the missionary message in its original fullness and purity will ever reach the heathen world it must be carried by those who believe it and teach it in its entirety. China, India, South America, Africa, Mexico, every nation under the sun, need the full-Gospel message of full and free salvation. Let the faithful arise, and bring them this message.

Making the Message Effective

The duty confronts us—will we rise to our responsibility? Our load of responsibility does not drop off when we are able to say that we "have done real well" in support of missions at home and abroad. It is only when it can be said with truth, "They have done what they could,"

that the burden of neglect of duty is gone. Here are a few essentials to highest success in mission work:

1. **Every member upon the altar.**

The ideal for every church is expressed in the words of the apostle: "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God." When Eph. 4:11-16 is true of us as a church, then we need have no fears of the rest—the Lord will take care of that.

2. **Every member a volunteer.**

Volunteer for what? For mission work. "But some are not qualified." Why not? It should be made clear that the boundary lines in the mission field were all put there by man. In God's sight the soul of the ignorant savage on the isles of the sea is as precious as is the soul of one who sleeps under your own roof. The maid in the kitchen, the boy on the farm, the rural worker in the home community, the worker in the nearby city mission or charitable home, the man just across the line in some other county or state, the missionary across the sea and on the opposite side of the globe, all are in the same field, and all should be about their Father's business. If they are, they are all missionaries. Every member should be ready to say to God, "Here am I, send me." God, in His infinite wisdom and love for souls, can be trusted to send you where you can be of greatest service to Him, even though this may be within a mile of home. From the time we enter the Church we should hold ourselves ready to obey the voice

of God as brought to us through the Holy Spirit and the directions of the Church.

3. A healthful spiritual atmosphere in every church community.

This is needed for the development of strong, spiritually-minded men and women. The present evil world is all ablaze with the pleasure-seeking and foolishness, the selfishness and degradation, the ungodliness and worldly lusts of sinful men. Such an atmosphere can not do otherwise than bring about spiritual ruin for any people who give themselves over to it. God lays it on the Church to see to it that our young people are saved from the blighting effects of such influences. Our business and business methods should be such that people are impressed with the fact that we recognize Christ as our Head, even in business. Our home life should give evidence that Christ is recognized as the Head there. Our social circles should be marked for purity and godliness as well as cheerfulness and friendship. Our church life should give evidence that we look upon religion as more than mere form or convenience. In short, our daily life should be marked for uprightness, honesty, sincerity, piety, truthfulness, cheerfulness, hopefulness, helpfulness, a genuine article of Christian life and experience which impresses the world that we have something worth having. Where this kind of an atmosphere prevails in a community, you may be sure that its effect will be felt not only upon our own young people but upon others as well.

4. School training.

Each one of our schools should have as one of its features a strong Bible department, a practical training school for Christian workers. This department should provide for, among other things, (1) an honest study of the Word; (2) a study of the practical problems connected with the experiences of Christian workers; (3) a study of the world-wide mission field; (4) a militant opposition to all forms of unbelief, and every other enemy of the pure religion of our Lord Jesus Christ, with faithful instructors turning the light of truth on the vicious features of these enemies. Graduates from our schools should not only be equipped for effective service in whatever kind of employment they may choose to enter, and which Christian people may rightfully engage in, but should be well indoctrinated in the whole-Gospel faith, loyal to God and the Church, in active fellowship with those "of like precious faith," able to withstand the gainsayers. Missionaries should not only be "apt to teach," but also apt in indoctrinating those who are won for the Gospel of Christ. When Christian workers are as loyal to the simple faith as they are enthusiastic in winning souls for Christ, and as capable and well equipped for service as they are enthusiastic and loyal, you have a force worth depending upon. Such is the type of workers which each of our schools should endeavor to send forth.

5. Financial support.

This is not the most important but a very es-

sential thing connected with the evangelization of the world. We recognize the value of Christian workers contributing as much as possible to their own support. It gives them a taste of the problems of the rank and file of common people and enables them to give valuable help and counsel in the solution of such problems. It helps to keep the body strong, a very valuable asset to every vigorous worker. It develops an appreciation of the value of a dollar, a very necessary qualification of the worker whose responsibility it is to handle public money. It was no hindrance to Paul, or to the cause he represented, to take time to work at his trade of tent-making whenever it suited, and thus get in closer touch with the people among whom he labored and understand at closer range the nature of their problems.

But these facts do not in any way argue for a lack of proper financial support of those who devote their time to the direct work of the Lord and of the Church. It takes about so much to maintain a missionary at his post, whether he does little or much. Why not add enough to this amount to enable him to do his very best in the way of spreading the Gospel in his territory without being hampered in his work for want of means? Am I correct in saying that to double our contributions toward the maintenance of our missions in India and South America would more than quadruple the results accomplished by these efforts? This, of course, on condition that the money thus spent would be judiciously invested.

The same rule holds good in support of mission work at home, especially in the rural field.

But where is the money to come from? asks some one. If we have already exhausted our resources, we can not raise it unless God, in answer to our prayers, makes it possible. The Lord neither asks nor expects us to do the impossible. But I am not sure that we are ready to raise such a question just yet. A conservative estimate of the net income of our 40,000 members would put it above the ten million mark annually. Ten per cent of that would adequately support our mission, charitable, educational, publication, and other interests in the Church, leaving a comfortable sum for home expenses.

Our purpose, however, in discussing the matter of financial support was not to say what the Mennonite Church or any other church should do or not do; but rather to call attention to the fact that an adequate financial support is essential to the highest success of any church enterprise. It takes a certain sum for any institution to exist. It is the sums contributed above that amount that count in the way of pushing out and accomplishing greater things for God.

6. Loyalty to the supporting church.

Our mission stations are but outposts of the Church. As such they are expected to represent the Church in all things. It is essential, therefore, that our mission stations be supplied with workers who from the heart can faithfully represent their church—that in preaching Christian doc-

trine they not only comply with the wishes of their church but preach their own convictions as well; that when they work to win converts it is not merely for the sake of making a showing that will please the Church, but it is because they have an impelling passion for the salvation of the lost; that all they undertake to do is not merely to meet the church requirements but from honest conviction they desire to do the very things which the Church feels should be done. Such a harmonious relation between the Church and her missions means not only a hearty support from the Church, in prayers and means, but, as a rule, it also means substantial progress on the part of the mission. There are exceptions, of course; but we are speaking of the rule. Other things being equal, a missionary enterprise prospers in proportion to its degree of loyalty to the supporting church.

7. Prayer.

We have mentioned this Christian essential a number of times, but its importance demands a special mention and special emphasis. When Christ admonished His disciples to "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest," He proposed something that only Divine Wisdom would think of under the circumstances. Man would feel tempted to rail down on an indifferent church and sleeping members, and beat about the bush vigorously in quest for volunteers. But Christ knows that the most effective way of working is to go

by way of the Throne; for when you pray in faith you go at once to the Fountainhead of blessings and of power. Prayer will at once unlock the storehouse of good things, for, besides the direct answers to your petitions, you make it possible for God to use you in answer to your own prayers.

Our Present Opportunities

We speak advisedly when we say "opportunities" rather than "trials;" for every trial, if we meet it right, means an opportunity. Never lose faith in God who, in accordance with His promise, has marvelously answered the prayer of faith on thousands of occasions. But don't forget to follow up your prayers with faithful work. Let our missionaries redouble their efforts to bring the Gospel to sinners, and sinners to Christ, thus in all probability increasing the membership at all our missions. Let our workers in all our home congregations do a similar work in their home communities. Let us stop immediately the wasting of our means for the "unnecessaries of life," paying into the Lord's treasury the money that most people would spend for luxuries. What, do you suppose, would an extra \$50,000 do for India or South America? What would it do in strengthening our home missions and rural work? "Can't spare the money"—do we hear? Perhaps not—but people without money can pray, and through this avenue perhaps the Lord will unlock the hearts of those who have the money to give. It has not been so many decades ago since we were quite sure that we could not support more than

two or three home missions besides our lone foreign mission in India. Now these missions are supported with much larger contributions than they received formerly, and the number of our missions has been multiplied at home and abroad. Look up—look around—“Look on the fields..... they are white already for the harvest.” Within our range of vision there are hundreds of open doors, and hundreds of young people whom God has endowed with talents sufficient to enter these doors. Brethren, pray; keep on praying; and the opportunities at our door will be translated into many golden sheaves to be gathered in the final great harvest. In this world are millions of “other sheep” whom God wants us to gather in. Go out into the harvest field, and souls that would otherwise perish in the eternal lake of fire will be rescued from the bondage of sin and sing praises to God in the realms of endless glory.

OUR PUBLICATION INTERESTS

The Mennonite Publishing House, as a church institution, dates from April, 1908. During the year previous to that nine Mennonite conferences each appointed a representative on the Mennonite Publication Board, and in the fall of 1907 the Mennonite General Conference appointed three more. With a membership of twelve (which has since been increased to nineteen) the Board was organized, purchased the Publications of the Mennonite Book and Tract Society and Gospel Witness Company of Scottdale, Pennsylvania, and the Mennonite periodicals published by the Mennonite Publishing Company of Elkhart, Indiana. For the first time in history, the Mennonite Church owned and was in full control of its own publications. The first number of the Gospel Herald, successor to both Herald of Truth (formerly published at Elkhart, Indiana) and the Gospel Witness (formerly published at Scottdale, Pennsylvania) appeared as the official organ of the Mennonite Church, April 4, 1908. But 1908 was not the beginning of publication work in the Mennonite Church.

Literary activities were a prominent feature of the early history of the Mennonite Church. The complete works of Menno Simons are still found in thousands of homes and widely read. Another noted book written during this time is

known to us as "Martyr's Mirror," written by Theilmann J. van Bracht. These and other books written by Mennonite authors in the sixteenth century are still in circulation. The first Mennonite bishop in America, William Rittenhouse, was the owner of a paper mill. One of the most enterprising literary achievements of the early Mennonites (with the help of others) in America was the translation of Martyr's Mirror from the Dutch into the German language, that the young people of the Mennonite Church in America might know the history of their people and be further indoctrinated in the faith of their fathers. Among other and later writers in the Church were Bishop Heinrich Funck of Franconia, Pennsylvania, who wrote a treatise on Baptism and a book on Christian doctrines; Peter Burkholder of Rockingham County, Virginia, to whom we are indebted for a number of publications, among them a Confession of Faith and a work on "Predestination;" John M. Brenneman of Lima, Ohio, whose books on "Christianity and War" and "Plain Teachings" are among the best known of his writings.

But it was not until the latter half of the nineteenth century that the Mennonites in America made the publication of books and periodicals one of their principal means of propagating their faith. Other books appeared from time to time at an earlier date, as noted in the preceding paragraph, but the bulk of Mennonite literature published in America was written within the past fifty years.

In 1864 there appeared the first number of the Herald of Truth, published in both English and German languages, with J. F. Funk as editor and proprietor. The paper was started in Chicago, but a few years later it was moved to Elkhart, Indiana, where the plant continued to grow and a company known as "Mennonite Publishing Company" was organized. The German edition of the Herald was afterwards merged with the "Mennonitische Rundschau," and the English paper was continued under its original name until April, 1908, when it was merged with the Gospel Witness and the new paper called "Gospel Herald." While the publishing plant at Elkhart passed into the hands of a company, doing business under the name of James A. Bell Company, the Mennonite Publishing Company is still doing a book business, with headquarters in the building which it formerly erected.

In 1905 a new paper was launched at Scottsdale, Pennsylvania, called "The Gospel Witness." At first the paper was printed in one of the local printing offices, but it soon became apparent that a building of our own was necessary, so that in the fall of the same year a small two-story frame building was erected. Another addition was built the following spring, which was followed a year later with the erection of a three-story brick structure, 40 by 70 feet in size. It was about this time that a church-wide movement was started in favor of the Church owning and controlling its own publications. Accordingly, the periodicals pub-

lished by the Gospel Witness Company were turned over to the Mennonite Publication Board, so that by the time the new building was completed it was occupied by the Board and the institution became known as the "Mennonite Publishing House." The Gospel Witness, after a brief history of three years, was merged with the Herald of Truth and became known as "Gospel Herald." This is a sixteen-page weekly, devoted to the interests of the cause of Christ in general and the Mennonite Church in particular. Among the other periodicals published by the House are the Christian Monitor, Mennonitische Rundschau, Youth's Christian Companion, Words of Cheer, Beams of Light, and a full line of Sunday school literature. In 1921 an entirely new publishing plant was erected at a cost of about \$125,000, in which building the work of the Board is now carried on. The entire plant is valued at over \$200,000. The new building was dedicated April 4, 1922, being the fourteenth anniversary of the merging of the Herald of Truth and Gospel Witness into the Gospel Herald.

The growth of our publications is an evidence of an awakening interest in the importance and power of literature among us. There is no stronger power or influence over the lives of the people than the power of the press. And the fact that this power is not always wielded for the best interests of the people makes it all the more necessary for those having the true faith of the Gospel to put forth greater efforts to promulgate and pro-

pagate the cause of Christ through the distribution of literature that is not only interesting but enlightening and scripturally sound. The great importance of literature at once emphasizes the great responsibility resting upon those commissioned to supply it. It is the

Work of the Mennonite Publishing House

to supply this literature.

A list of the principal periodicals published by the House has already been given. Besides this, there has not been a year within the history of the House but that a number of new books were published. Our tract work is quite extensive, circulating not only in America but also in several countries in Europe. The House does some job-work outside the publication of Church literature, but that part of its work is negligible compared with the work of keeping the public supplied with good literature. It is the aim of the Publication Board, as resources become available, to extend this work. There is scarcely a limit to the amount of good which may be done in advancing the cause of Christ through the agency of literature that is adapted to the needs of the people and scripturally sound. Free literature is sent out by the tons by organizations holding anti-scriptural views as to faith and life, and one of the most effective ways of counteracting such influences is to add to the amount of scripturally sound literature sent out in the same way. The

Support

of the Mennonite Publishing House and its work may be by several different ways. For instance, when the work was first started, and again during the past few years when the new building was erected, people contributed quite freely through direct donations. Our tract work is supported in this way. Others have seen fit to make donations to the end that the Gospel Herald and others of our periodicals may be sent free to the people who are too poor to pay. In such cases the House meets the generous donors half way and supplies the literature at half price. There are many causes for which such direct donations could be made, and the cause of Christ thereby strengthened; for these silent messengers sent out are a powerful agency in winning souls for Christ.

But the Mennonite Publishing House is conducted on a basis that these direct contributions do not need to be made, except for extraordinary purposes, unless generous donors see an opportunity for extending the power of the press beyond that which the ordinary income of the House could supply. While its policy is to send out books at the lowest cost possible to the purchaser, it seeks to have a small margin of profit on practically all the books handled, and in this way cover the running expenses of the institution. A very substantial way, therefore, to support the Publishing House is to patronize it in subscribing for its periodicals, in the purchase of books, and in job work provided you have any to give. The

larger the circulation of the periodicals and the more liberal the purchase of books the more the House will be able to do for the Church in advancing the cause of Christ. For this reason, when the House sends out its call for help, the two things usually named are **prayers** and **patronage**. If the same warm support along these lines that the House has enjoyed during the past will be continued, the House will continue to remain on a self-supporting basis. It is

The Purpose of the House

to help strengthen the cause of Christ and the Church in every way possible. Its publications are all intended for this purpose. Some of our periodicals are published at a loss, financially, for the reason that they are strengthening some needy cause. The aim of the House is to keep in touch with our congregations, church institutions, and church enterprises generally, that every opportunity may be improved to aid in strengthening the cause and advancing the interests of all these forces. The strengthening of our congregations and institutions, the extension of the mission cause, the best and highest interests of our schools, the combating of dangerous heresies, and all other things in which the Church is vitally interested, all come in for their share of attention on the part of the House. That God may direct in all these things and that the efforts put forth may not be in vain; that the Church as a whole may reciprocate by means of prayer and friendly co-

operation, is the wish of those most vitally interested in the work of the Mennonite Publishing House.

CHURCH AND SCHOOL

Never before have church and school been more closely connected in the minds of the people than they are at this time. This is due partly to the fact that there is an ever-increasing number of ordained ministers connected with academies, colleges, and universities, partly because a larger percentage of church leaders are college-trained men than there used to be, partly because of the increasing number of denominational schools, and partly because churches are being more and more dominated by school influences.

Early Mennonite Schools

We sometimes hear people talk about Elkhart Institute (now Goshen College) as being the first among Mennonite schools. But the fact is that it was quite a common thing, among pioneer Mennonite settlements in America, to see a building in each community used for public worship on Sunday and for school purposes during the week. As the congregations grew and larger houses of worship were needed, church houses were built. To this day it is not an unusual thing to see in the older Mennonite settlements in the East a schoolhouse on one corner and a church on the opposite corner at some cross-roads—monuments to the far-sightedness of those early churchmen. Christopher Dock, a pioneer Mennonite school

teacher in America, is the author of several books, and is said to be the author of the first book on pedagogy ever written in America. With the advent of the public school system the necessity for private schools became less pronounced, and they passed out of existence.

Need for Church Schools

But as time went on the need for denominational schools became more and more apparent. Many churches felt the need of schools under their own control, that their young people might not only be held for their own churches but especially trained for service in denominational life. Added to this was the fact that the Bible was slowly but surely being crowded out of the public schools while Darwinism and other things contrary to Scripture found their way into school and college text books. These things, together with adverse influences from distinctly anti-Christian sources, is responsible for the growth of the denominational school.

In response to a pronounced feeling that we ought to have a school among Mennonites and under Mennonite control, Dr. H. A. Mumaw of Elkhart, Indiana, supported heartily by J. S. Coffman, J. S. Hartzler, and other Mennonite ministers, started a school at Elkhart in 1895. A year later a company known as "Elkhart Institute Association" was formed with Bro. Mumaw as president and Bro. Coffman as secretary. A suitable building was erected, and "Elkhart Institute" be-

came a permanent institution. Later on Bro. Coffman was elected president of the Association, which place he held at the time of his death in 1899. In 1903 the school was moved to Goshen, Indiana, and became known as "Goshen College."

The principal reasons urged at the time of the founding of Elkhart Institute why our church should assume the oversight and control over the education of its young people were—

1. Lack of religious training in the public schools.
2. Influences in other schools through which many of our most talented young people were lost to the Church.
3. The need for the proper indoctrination of our own young people; that they might not only become nominal members but ardent supporters and promoters of the faith.
4. The need for trained workers to carry on the work of the Church at home and abroad.
5. The need for institutions which made provisions for properly safeguarding our young people against the destructive evils of the times while acquiring their education.

Other Church Schools

For a number of years Elkhart Institute, and later Goshen College, was advertised as "our only church school." But this could be said with truth for only a few years. In 1909, after much prayerful consideration and after favorable action by

both Kansas-Nebraska and Missouri-Iowa Conferences, a school was started at Hesston, Kansas, under the auspices of the Mennonite Board of Education and named "Hesston Academy and Bible School." D. H. Bender was chosen principal and T. M. Erb secured as business manager. The school kept growing, until about ten years later it was advanced to the rank of a college and the name changed to "Hesston College and Bible School." A remarkable thing about this school is that since its beginning there have been no changes made in the head officials of the institution and comparatively few changes on the faculty. It is recognized as an institution that is not only loyal to the Church but also efficient in work and safely conservative in faith and methods.

Soon after Hesston Academy was started, a movement was started to launch a Mennonite school somewhere in the East. The interest was centered first at Denbigh, Virginia, then at Alexandria, Virginia, where a few special Bible terms were held, and finally a property was purchased near Harrisonburg, Virginia, and "Eastern Mennonite School" became an actual reality. The first principal of the school was J. B. Smith, formerly a member on Hesston College faculty. He was succeeded, in 1922, by A. D. Wenger. The school has enjoyed a steady growth from the beginning, and of late has been brought to a much better financial standing than it had in former years.

During the past decade there has been talk of establishing other Mennonite schools, but to

date none have been built. For a number of years, however, there have been regular short Bible schools lasting from four to six weeks, a few of them having the appearance of permanent institutions. Following are some of the places where such schools have been held: Kitchener, Ontario; Canton, Ohio; Johnstown, Pennsylvania; Wolford, North Dakota; Calgary, Alberta; Hubbard and Albany, Oregon.

School Problems

The launching of Mennonite schools did not mean an immediate end of school problems. There are always errors connected with pioneer efforts and, besides, we need never expect to see the time when our schools will be entirely free from perplexing problems. Goshen College being the oldest of our church schools and therefore a pioneer in Mennonite educational activities, it is but natural that most of the trials connected with the work of the Mennonite Board of Education should be in connection with this institution.

By the advice of its leaders, the Elkhart Institute Association was disbanded in 1905 and the work taken over by conference appointees who formed the "Mennonite Board of Education" and were incorporated under that name. The reasons for the change in the government of the institution are found in the fact that the conduct of the school did not meet the approval of the body of Mennonite people, and it was thought that if the institution were placed in the hands of conference

representatives the Church at large would take a greater interest in it. But it did not take long to demonstrate that the difficulty did not lie in the form of the organization supposed to be governing the school but in the fact that the faculty leaders had a different conception of many of the standards of Christian life and doctrine from what the rank and file of the Church had. In other words, first the members of the Elkhart Institute Association, and later the members of the Mennonite Board of Education, had the Church view of these standards while the faculty leaders had the view which they imbibed by years of associations and training in universities and seminaries. This difference in viewpoints, perhaps more than any other thing, is responsible for most of the trouble between the Board and the College. As matters now stand, most of the active opponents of the present Board policies are out of tune with the Church on such points as dress restrictions, life insurance, the devotional covering, the salaried ministry, attitude toward Modernism, and related matters pertaining to life and doctrine. The underlying question, therefore, is (and has been, to a greater or less extent, for years) Will Goshen College support the Board and the Church in maintaining the standards held sacred by the Church for many generations, or will it cast its influence in support of an effort to remodel the Church after more popular standards? The Mennonite Board of Education entertains no other idea than that of standing loyally by the Church

and to do its very best to the end that all the institutions under its control take the same attitude.

When Goshen College was founded the principal of Elkhart Institute, Bro. N. E. Byers, became president of the college. Since his retirement in 1913 to become dean of Bluffton College, the following have served as president of Goshen College: J. E. Hartzler, G. J. Lapp, H. F. Reist, I. R. Detweiler (acting president), and Daniel Kauffman.* The institution maintained a steady growth until within the past few years, which growth probably would have continued had there been a working harmony between the school, the Board, and the Church at large. That the efforts now being put forth in behalf of the institution will result not only in the unifying of our school forces in the Church but also in putting Goshen College upon a more substantial basis than it has ever enjoyed before, is the earnest wish and prayer of those who have thrown their life into this task.

Because of fundamental differences between the two schools of thought represented, as already noted, it was found necessary to call the Board together in special session in April, 1923. The Board was confronted by circumstances which led it to decide that under existing circumstances it did not see its way clear to go ahead with arrangements for the work at Goshen College for the following year. When it again assembled in

*Since the above was written, Bro. S. C. Yoder of Kalona, Iowa, was elected president of Goshen College.

regular session two months later the question of the future of Goshen College was again fully discussed, and the conclusion reached was that the work at the college should continue, but that under existing circumstances it would be more practical to suspend the work one year and reopen in the fall of 1924. Accordingly an administrative committee of five was appointed to plan for the reopening of the institution at that time.

There were, however, a few members on the Board, and many more friends of the institution outside the Board, who felt that the Board was making a mistake in suspending the school. While it is true that the prevailing sentiment in the school was not in harmony with the standards of the Church with reference to life and doctrine, it was also true that there was a large section of the Church that was eager for an opportunity to give the institution hearty support on condition that it would be reorganized upon a thoroughly loyal and conservative basis. That element in the Church has never had an opportunity to demonstrate its willingness and competency to support such a school in the Middle West. Moreover, a faculty was in sight that could have taken care of a standard college that was adequately supported and equipped otherwise, and full arrangements had been made to canvass the Church and ascertain its willingness or unwillingness to support a standard college. Whether these plans would have succeeded had an opportunity been given to carry them out, will never be known; but they

had the advantage of carrying an appeal to many a loyal heart that is disposed to feel discouraged at the sight of a closed Goshen College.

But the Board, after fully considering these things in the light of the existing circumstances, saw fit to take the course that it did. As one who favored the idea of going ahead without interruption, I am fully convinced that the proper thing for us to do now is to give the Board our fullest measure of support—with the understanding, of course, that the Board remains loyal to the Church and true to the conservative faith. That body has been entrusted with the responsibility of providing for the education of our young people, and during the weeks and months preceding its last annual meeting the constant prayer of its members was that God might have His way with them in all things. Let us therefore make the most of existing circumstances, support the Board heartily, and continue our prayer for divine directions and guidance, looking forward to the time when all our schools will not only be fully equipped to render efficient service but centers from which young people are sent forth to carry the genuine Christian faith to the ends of the world.

The Board was unanimous in its desire that the college continue without interruption. And it was generally conceded that had there been only the present faculty and student body to deal with there would have been little serious difficulty in making the needed arrangements for the continuance of the work without interruption. But the

Board considered that the opposition to the standards maintained by the Board was too pronounced and the issues involved too far-reaching to undertake the work without more time for preparation. The real leadership of the opposition to the Board, while reflected within the institution, is to be found in former officials and students of the college now holding positions elsewhere. The issues at stake may be summarized as follows:

1. Shall our schools maintain the same standards of life and doctrine as those held by the Church?
2. Shall the Church control her own institutions?
3. Which is the more essential, the spiritual or the professional qualifications of a teacher or school official?
4. Shall we save our young people from the blighting touch of Modernism?
5. Shall our young people be sent forth from our schools as defenders or critics of the Church and its doctrines?

As a sidelight on the plans and aims of the Mennonite Board of Education it may be well at this time to call attention to the fact that at its regular annual meeting in June, 1922, a resolution was passed committing the Board to the idea of a central Mennonite standard college, and a ways and means committee was chosen to assist in the work of further unifying our school system. It is commonly conceded that Goshen College, because of its central location and superior equipment, would be the logical place for this central school, provided that local environments can be gotten into a favorable condition. It is to be hoped that

all friends of the institution may work to the end that such favorable conditions will be brought about.

Further Thoughts as to Needs

We have before this spoken of the need for denominational schools. Let us further consider this question, from the standpoint of present needs.

There was a time when parents had the liberty to send their children to school or keep them at home, but that time is past. Compulsory education, in most states, has been extended to the high school, and in the opinion of some it may be extended to the junior college. It is therefore not a question for parents to decide whether they shall send their children to school, but as to **where** they shall send them. Not, Shall they attend school? but, What shall be their standing in the eyes of both God and man when they get through?

There are communities where conditions are such that it is advisable for parents to keep their children at home as long as they can send them to home schools with profit. Where there is a strong community sentiment against Modernism so that real Christian teachers are selected for common schools and high schools, where the influences of home and Church are such that our young people grow up with clean morals and maintain a loyal attitude to the Church, our advice to parents is to keep children at home as long as they can. But unfortunately such is not

the case in all communities. To say nothing of the influence of such things as the dance, the military drill, the multitudinous parties and joy-rides, theatricals, and other things which leave an unfavorable stamp upon the lives of young people, were we to repeat the things which we have heard concerning the moral (or rather immoral) conditions in many communities—where the blight of immorality left its stamp upon once pure-minded boys and girls reared in Christian homes—we would present some reasons why parents who love their children would want some other school to shelter their children than the high school or college in their own communities. Perhaps your home community is not like that. We praise God if it is not. But there are enough communities where the curse of immorality is so alarmingly great that parents owe it to their own children to find a more favorable place for them to continue their school work.

In the preceding paragraph we spoke largely from a moral standpoint. We wish to notice briefly the necessity for looking after the spiritual interests of our children. We think of some schools where they are comparatively free from immoral influences but where the standards of faith and life are vitally different from those held by our own people. In fact, it is the influence of such schools that is responsible for the more serious problems among us. We stand for the fundamentals of the Christian faith, for a pure life, for honesty, uprightness, freedom from all demoraliz-

ing influences. So do all other evangelical Christians. We stand for a literal observance of all the ordinances instituted by our Lord; for non-resistance, non-secrecy, against swearing of oaths, for complete separation from the world, against secret societies, against life insurance, against the unequal yoke with unbelievers. Right here is where we are pronounced "narrow" by many who stand with us in our advocacy of a pure and upright life. We look upon the Church as not merely a social-uplift and civic-betterment society or club, but as an organization of "born again" children of God who have been redeemed from their sins and are commissioned to make Christ and His salvation known to all men. We hold ideals as to hardship, self-denial, heavenly-mindedness, economy, freedom from the entanglements of sin, that are not usually shared by the masses of people. Our young people have a right to be sheltered under institutions that are staunch promoters of such ideals. In short, if their Christian training does not keep pace with their physical and intellectual development the more schooling they get the more liable they are to become spiritual wrecks. Outside of the well regulated Christian home, there is no place where we can more effectively take care of the training of young people than in our own schools.

Growth is a law of life. But let not the growth of our young people be of that fungous kind which leaves great marks of worldliness upon their lives and characters while their spiritual life

is sapped by such development. To make proper provision for the training of our young people and safeguarding them from the many evils and temptations with which this present evil world abounds means great sacrifice, an enormous expense, financially and otherwise; but where is the father or mother, where is the preacher or teacher or other leader in positions of responsibility, that is not impressed with the conviction that under existing circumstances no sacrifice which we are able to make will be too great if thereby we will succeed in holding our young people for God and the Church and training them for effective work in winning the lost for Jesus? The burden of our hearts should be to bring up the rising generation a race of stalwarts in the faith, armed with "the full armor of God," "zealous of good works," indoctrinated in word and life, spending their lives in the service of God and man. To this end we need—

1. A clearer vision, on the part of the whole Church, of the dangers and duties and opportunities before us.

2. A Mennonite Board of Education composed solidly of men who are sound in the faith, loyal to the Church, level-headed in business affairs, having a sympathetic attitude toward our schools.

3. Administrative officials in each school who are qualified for the places they have been called to fill, in complete harmony with the Church and the Board, and who, under trial have proven them-

selves unflinchingly loyal to the doctrinal standards of the Church.

4. A faculty in each school having the qualities just described in connection with administrative officials, professionally qualified to fill their respective places.

5. Curricula having a wide range of elective courses adapted to the needs of our young people, designed to fit them for places which will keep them in active touch and fellowship with some congregation composed of members "of like precious faith," or in the mission field extending the borders of the Kingdom.

6. Complete harmony between the Gospel of Christ, the Mennonite Church, the Mennonite Board of Education, the faculty, the student body, and the friends and supporters of all our schools.

7. An adequate support, both moral and financial, to enable the Board to solve our most important school problems.

Before closing this message we desire to offer

A Few Suggestions

which, if carried out, may help not only in the solution of some of our school problems but also in the work of the Church along other lines. Among other things, we suggest—

1. That we do not lean too heavily upon any one Church institution or enterprise and expect it to be the panacea for all ills in the Church. Each institution must help and do its part; but unless home, school, publishing house, missions, preach-

ers, teachers, missionaries, editors, superintendents, and all others in positions of leadership and authority join in a hearty and harmonious and Church-wide effort to maintain the standards of the Gospel and of the Church we will fail in proportion to the number of members thus proving their unfaithfulness. When all help it makes the work easy; when part hang back or prove themselves indifferent or disloyal, the cause suffers.

2. That we do not fail, as individual members, to give the Church and her institutions and overseers our heartiest and most sympathetic support. They who hang back or oppose the Church that makes a faithful effort to maintain the standard of the cross and hold its entire membership to this standard should remember that they are opposing God rather than the Church, as God told Samuel when disobedient Israel was clamoring to be "like other nations."

3. That care be taken in the selection of men and women for places of responsibility in the Church. It is impossible to find one without faults; but it ought not to be impossible to find those who are loyal and at least in a measure qualified for the places to which they are chosen. "Faithful and able" is the Gospel standard. If ever there was a time when these scriptural qualities should be looked for and insisted upon, that time is right now.

4. That we do not allow our attitude toward the Church to be confused with personalities.

Personal conduct needs to be taken into consideration and transgressors properly dealt with; but more important than what individuals do or fail to do (so far as church relations are concerned) is the question as to whether we are in harmony with the doctrinal standards and ideals of our church. There are now, as there have always been, imperfect men; but it is a sad day when we will allow the imperfections of men to disturb our relations with a church with which, in the sum total of her Christian doctrines, we are in harmony. Better stand together to maintain the doctrine and discipline of the Church, and use our united endeavors to win the erring according to Gal. 6:1. Believing as we do that the church of our choice stands for a pure and unadulterated Gospel faith, let us rise above the realm of personal criticism and animosity, and stand together in advancing the interests of the Church we love. Fervent love will melt away all bitterness, if that is all that stands between us, and pave the way for a perfect unity of the faith and of the Spirit.

5. That an effort be made to raise one million dollars, on a ten-year program, to get our school system on its feet and in proper working order. **Impossible!** do you say? If it is, it is; but here are a few facts that we should consider before we say the word:

1. There has probably not been a year in the last decade that Mennonites did not spend more than a million dollars on "the unnecessaries of life;" such as high-priced automobiles and musical

instruments, pleasure trips, superfluities in wearing apparel, chewing gum, tobacco, "soft" drinks, excessive eating, unnecessary expense in building and furniture, etc., etc.

2. Some who have systematized their living expenses have the following on their program: for the Lord's treasury, 10 per cent of their net income; for education, 10 per cent. If that rule were followed by the whole Church it would mean more than a million dollars annually for each of these purposes.

3. In a concerted effort for this purpose, it is probable that a considerable portion would be supplied in the form of wills, bequests, annuities, etc., that are not usually taken from income or living expenses.

As to ways and means of raising the \$1,000,000, here are a few remarks that I have heard that might give one an idea from which to work out a workable plan:

"I'll give a hundred dollars a year for ten years."

"I'll be one of a thousand to give \$100 annually for ten years, provided our schools are kept on a conservative basis."

"I'll give \$500 a year as long as I am a wage-earner."

Gifts of several thousand dollars each have been proposed by generous donors. From these and other suggestions the Board might work out a plan that would enable us to reach our goal. There may be reasons why such a program, at

this time, would not be the wisest thing to adopt, but it is not impossible—provided there are enough people interested, and convinced that it should be done.

How would this money be used? Here is one suggestion: Let the money (whatever the sum contributed would be) be distributed as follows: One-half to be used as an endowment fund for the Central Mennonite College, and the other half be divided in equal parts among our three schools and the Mennonite Board of Education. That would put both the Board and our three schools upon a substantial financial basis, provide a plan whereby all our school forces could work together unitedly for a common end, and make it unnecessary to solicit the Church for further financial support for our schools for years to come.

* * *

Some of the things herein noted are not strictly and wholly connected with our schools; but the chapter head—"Church and School"—admits of their consideration here. Whether it is school, Church, home, mission interests, Sunday school, or some other cause or enterprise connected with Christian life and duty that is under consideration, there are two things which should never pass out of sight:

1. The building up of a Church that is strong in the Lord, sound in the Christian faith, faithful in the performance of Christian duty, aggressive in the work of advancing the cause of Christ at home and abroad.

2. The conservation and training of our young people, to the end that this standard may be handed down to succeeding generations.

“Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”

This message was written because as a Church we are confronted with a number of vital issues which need our immediate, thoughtful, and most prayerful consideration. It is still within the range of possibilities to solve these problems satisfactorily to the body of our people and hold them together in a unity of the faith and united effort for the furtherance of the cause of Christ and the Church. But we can not do it through indifference to actual conditions and uncharitably denouncing those who differ from us. Neither can we do it by withdrawing our support from conferences, congregations, boards, church institutions, and other church enterprises because they are not to our liking and start independent movements of our own. It is true today, as in the day our Savior first uttered the words, that “an house divided against itself cannot stand.” With charity for all and malice toward none,” with an unswerving loyalty to God and His Word, with a sympathetic attitude toward the Church and whole-hearted support of its enterprises, with a heart and face set like flint against the corrupting and destructive influences of a sinful world and continual watchfulness and prayer as the rule of the Church, with a zeal for righteousness that will not admit of any compromise with sin, with the love of God shed abroad in our hearts to the ex-

tent that a yearning for the salvation of the lost is the ruling passion of our lives, may we look forward with hope and trust in the living God to add His blessings to our labors. Will we rise to our opportunity?

F I N I S

DATE DUE

NOV 30 1999			
NOV 30 1999			
7/31/03			
MAY 30 2001			

BX8121 .K21
The Mennonite church and current

Princeton Theological Seminary-Speer Library



1 1012 00041 3882